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JOB ABBOTT.

The Acting Committee, conforming to the wishes of some, intends to furnish something like a pocket edition of the works of the new church. This book is given as a specimen of the paper, type, and size of the page, of all the books which it may print. Economy in all respects has been studied. The paper, as will be seen, is good, though moderate in price. The type is of a fair size for all eyes to read. It is of the size technically called small pica, and yet is on so thin a body, that it will take in as much, if not more, matter than ordinarily the next smaller size, called long primer. The page, a duodecimo, is as large as the paper will admit. Thus the most matter is put into the greatest space at the least waste of paper. And yet the book is of such a size, that any one can easily hold it in his hand while reading, or carry it in his trunk or pocket when travelling. It is expected that, in process of time, all the works of Swedenborg, as well as the collateral works of the new church, will be published in a size and style uniform with this book. And thus what has long been a desideratum will be supplied.



JOB ABBOTT;

OR,

REASONS

FOR ABANDONING

THE TRINITARIAN, ARIAN, AND UNITARIAN
DOCTRINES,

AND EMBRACING THAT OF

THE NEW CHRISTIAN CHURCH:

CONTAINING ALSO, STRICTURES ON

THE GENERAL BAPTIST "CONFESSION OF FAITH,"

WITH

SOME REMARKS ON THE PECULIAR DOCTRINES OF THE
METHODISTS AND QUAKERS.

~~~~~  
A NARRATIVE DRAWN UP BY A MINISTER.  
~~~~~

A man unblameable in word and thought,
A man hath risen,—a man whom God hath taught,—
With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
And all the love of the beloved John,
To storm the citadels men build in air,
And smite the untemper'd wall 'tis death to spare,
To sweep away all refuges of lies,
And place, instead of quirks that men devise,
The living truths of God before their eyes.

~~~~~  
PHILADELPHIA :

REPRINTED FROM THE LONDON EDITION BY THE ACTING  
COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL CONVENTION.

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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REASONS presented by an individual to his fellow-Christians on so serious an occasion as the occurrence of a change in his religious opinions, and in justification of that change, are deserving of serious attention. This the thoughtful mind will readily admit; and the liberal mind will also extend a kind, a candid, and indulgent hearing.

In the present case, however, these "Reasons" are presented to the public in the name of an individual *deceased*. In defence of this proceeding, the writer can only say, that he is moved to it by considerations sufficiently weighty. It is within his own knowledge that the "Reasons" assigned were substantially those of the individual to whom they are imputed; but since, in putting them together, he has necessarily moulded them into his own form, he is willing to make himself responsible for them. Nevertheless he has availed himself of a kind of narrative form into which he has thrown them, to conceal himself personally from the view of the reader; and to present himself merely as *one of the ministers of the New Christian Church*. Theological discussions are too apt to call forth personal feelings in those who are not sufficiently patient under contradiction; and it is *for their sakes* that he wishes to direct their displeasure, should it be aroused, rather against a personation, than a real person. It would, indeed, be well if all who are engaged in controversy, and especially religious controversy, could feel as if the controversy were carried on between *books*, or between *abstractions*, rather than between persons; for in such case the judgment would be more likely to proceed according to the merits of the question, than when it is brought under the distorting influence of personal feelings.

It is possible that some readers may not only take

offence, but actually feel shocked, on finding opinions treated so freely which are sanctioned, as they consider, by time, by authority, by rank, by learning, and by the conscientious attachment of numbers of worthy persons. But was not this also the feeling of Saul, when the innovations of Christian teachers moved his strong, and doubtless conscientious indignation, and led him to acts of persecution against the innovators? Too many there are who have yet to learn, that feelings of indignation against those who presume to differ from them, are no sign of a truly Christian spirit. A conscientious zeal may be indicated by such feelings, but it is not a zeal according to knowledge. In giving way to them, the consideration is overlooked, that they are much more likely to injure than to benefit even a good cause. Whatever respect may be due to zealous persons on the score of conscientiousness, something more than this is required to give purity to their motive, and wisdom to their judgment.

If the truth of opinions is always to be determined by prescription, or by the number of voices in their favor, it may then be alleged, without fear of contradiction, that Christianity itself, in any form, cannot be true, because it is not received by a *majority* of the inhabitants of the earth; such is the case even at the present day, 1800 years after its first revelation. This fact shews clearly, how dangerous it is to assert that the numerousness of a sect is a mark of the Divine blessing; and that the contrary condition is a proof of the want of it. It is long since truth and righteousness possessed a majority of adherents upon earth.

The writer has no wish to give offence to any one by his statements; and he is very much inclined to conclude, that if the reader be a wise man, he will not take offence; but if he *should* feel offended, that must not be esteemed the fault of the writer. The latter is desirous to address his readers *as wise men*, following the example of Paul when he said, "*I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say.*" But it would not be treatment suitable for wise men, were he to keep back any part of what is deemed truth, and thus to mutilate evidence, from a fear of offending strong wills, or weak understandings. It would not, indeed, be acting liberally even to surmise, that offence

will be taken without reasonable cause. While, then, the writer freely addresses the *understandings* of his readers, let him be candidly met with calm and sober judgment, and not with blind and excited feelings.

There may, perhaps, be some persons, who will deem these "Reasons" unwarrantable assumptions. This may be expected from such as are warm partizans, or from such as have never condescended to submit their opinions to be freely canvassed, but, on the contrary, have demanded implicit respect for them, merely because they are *their own* opinions. The writer is constrained to say, that he regards such a narrow state of the judgment as truly pitiable. Such individuals know nothing of "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free," being still "entangled with the yoke of bondage," through an excessive self-complacency, and self-esteem. No man has the least right to claim respect for his opinions, beyond what the usages of politeness allow. The writer would neither laud, nor depreciate another, merely on account of his opinions. He esteems and respects that man only, whose moral wisdom is seen in his conduct; and he feels that he could not possibly love his Maker in sincerity, if he did not love that man who bears the image of his goodness, whatever his opinions may be. He is sorry to say, that he has sometimes found meanness and vice in company with opinions which he deems true; and he rejoices to confess, that he has found many virtues associated with opinions which he cannot but regard as absurdly false, and extensively detrimental. It has always been to him a ground for rejoicing, that the practical precepts of the Holy Scriptures are as living waters which never fail, and which flow continually in all their crystal purity, for the refreshment of every one, of every possible speculative opinion, who possesses "an honest and a good heart."

Wherever religious virtue exists, there God is present; for it could not exist a moment without Him who is its only source. Religious virtue, and the favor of God, are, in fact, identical.

It is only those who are strangers to the true constitution of the mind, and the relation of the will and understanding to each other, who are surprised that the affections residing

in the will are sometimes much better than the incongruous notions which reside in the understanding; or that the affections residing in the wills of other persons, are entirely opposed to the pure truths which have been implanted in their understandings. The case is this: wrong opinions cannot prevent a person from acting rightly, so far as he knows what is right. Nothing, indeed, is more common than to find opposite sentiments abiding peacefully together in the same mind,—possibly through reluctance in their owner to bring them into collision in the process of reflecting, comparing, and judging. In such a case, so far as the individual is well-disposed, he will habitually and spontaneously give the preference, and thence a primary influence and superior activity, to those ideas in his mind which are good and practical; and, on the other hand, so far as he is ill-disposed, he will give his personal influence, and thus predominance, to such of his opinions as are false in speculation, and injurious in action. As wrong opinions, therefore, do not *compel* wrong action, so neither do right opinions *compel* right action. The understanding *can* be raised above the corrupt will, and thus be enabled to see the truth, so that its possessor may be able freely to determine to which he will give the preponderance, whether to the corrupt propensities of the fallen natural will, or to the truths of the understanding derived from Revelation. Again, the individual *may* refuse to suffer his understanding to be thus elevated, and so may persist in making it the base and degraded instrument of his low, impure, and selfish passions; or what is worse, he *may* allow those passions to trample under foot the sacred truths which he has already acquired and professes to believe.

These principles being duly seen and appreciated, the reader will perceive, that if he is an upright and honest man, and a good and useful member of society, the writer has every respect for his person; *but as for his opinions*,—he can only consent to treat them with respect so far as he perceives them to be calculated to benefit him, or so far as he thinks them to be true, and consequently to the advantage of his fellow-men; he cannot respect them so far as he is conscientiously convinced that they are erroneous, and consequently more or less mischievous. Although he does

not consider mistaken opinions as *necessarily* productive of immoral effects in every individual case, inasmuch as every one who can distinguish between right and wrong may counteract their tendency by doing right, yet he cannot but see that they *must* have a tendency towards some kind of action or other; if truth has a tendency towards goodness,—and that it has, no one can reasonably doubt,—the tendency of error must be in the *opposite* direction. Error is intellectual disorder; and disorder in the understanding cannot possibly have a tendency to lead to order in the will. Absolute ignorance and unmixed error (if such a state be possible) imply the utmost degree of moral degradation, although without guilt, and to suppose them co-existent with a state of moral order and virtue, involves a contradiction in terms. But while he admits the tendency of truth towards goodness, he cannot but deny that a true faith will, of itself, produce good works. It certainly has a tendency towards them, and the admission of this is all that experience justifies. If it be demanded, “Will not faith produce good works by Divine Grace acting upon it, and with it?” It is answered, “It will, *provided the individual himself freely submits his will to its guidance, but not otherwise.*” The Creator has made man free to choose between life and death; and to form, under Himself, and according to his revealed instructions, his own spiritual and moral character, by the right application of his power of choice. Were it otherwise, man would be a mere machine, altogether unconscious of rational happiness.

It is impossible to calculate too extensively the mischief that arises from the unphilosophical axiom so common in the “religious world,”—that “a true faith *necessarily produces* good works!” How many persons there are who, not doubting their own faith to be a true one, are led to *wait* for its producing the promised fruits of righteousness, instead of diligently setting themselves to work in the Lord’s vineyard, *by freely compelling themselves*, with all their heart and soul and mind and strength, *to conform to the laws of his Holy Word*. It depends upon the *will* of the believer of a *false* faith, whether *he will suffer it* to lead him away from the practical precepts of Christianity, or not; and it depends upon the *will* of the believer of a *true*



faith, whether or not he will submit himself freely and entirely to its guidance, by the observance of those holy laws of life, to which a *true* faith invariably points and leads.

God is, of course, present with every one to operate for the accomplishment of his own purposes, according to his own laws; and while those laws demonstrate that he never *forces* the will of man, those purposes, springing as they do from infinite love and mercy, imply, that He must needs afford *all power* to his creatures in every case, and at all times, to bend their wills to his purposes, in complying with his instructions; and, therefore, that he *will* give, and of necessity *must* give, all power (and likewise inclination so far as agrees with the freedom of the human will) to carry out the truth into practice, and also to abstain from acting upon erroneous views imbibed by education. It being then granted that the Divine purpose which gave the command is perpetual and unchangeable, and therefore necessarily present with every one, and operative to afford power in furtherance of its own objects, it is clear that no one ought to *wait* for his faith to produce good works, but knowing that *he has the power* to obey, he ought immediately to proceed to obey; he ought to feel assured, that the only way by which the provided and offered *power* can become in him individually a new, and living, and abiding *principle* of action, is, *by his using it*, and thus inrooting, and as it were incorporating, it into his spiritual constitution. He who said, "*Labour for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life,*" also gave us to understand, that to labour for heavenly dispositions, and to be spiritually fed with them by Him who is at the same time "the Life," and the "Bread of life," are *simultaneous operations*, and, indeed, is *one and the same act*: for He also said, "*My MEAT IS to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work.*" (John iv. 34.) And this exactly agrees with John's words, "*This IS THE LOVE of GOD, that we KEEP his COMMANDMENTS;*" so that, in the *spiritual* economy, to labour for spiritual food, and to receive and eat it; or, in other words, *to do* good outwardly, and *to become* good inwardly, takes place simultaneously, and is, in effect, one and the same thing.

When it is thus seen that "manners (or morals) make

the man," and that opinions are comparatively but as things incidental; when it is seen that man takes his *essential* character from his will, as determined by his conduct, and not from his understanding, as determined by his opinions; in short, when it is seen that the man himself is such as his ruling love is, and not such as his faith is, then it will be perceived, that in the following pages the condemnation of opinions *does not in the slightest degree involve the moral or personal condemnation, or contempt of those who hold them.* Every man is entitled to all possible respect who acts the part of a good citizen, and who, so far as the view of man can penetrate, also demeans himself as becomes a practical Christian, and an upright and honest man. So long as opinions are discussed *fairly* and *judiciously*, nothing but good can arise from their discussion. The writer not having the least objection to allow his own opinions to be discussed in the freest manner possible,—*provided they be discussed fairly and intelligently*,—has only taken that liberty with others, which he most readily consents should be taken with himself. He objects to his opinions being discussed *unfairly*, because such discussion would prove injurious to his opponent's spiritual and moral state; and he objects to their being discussed unintelligently, because this would be a useless waste of time. But neither controversial unfairness, nor foolishness, *can touch him individually.* He is only concerned personally with the truth or falsehood of the allegations of his opponent, as they affect the accuracy or inaccuracy of his own sentiments. If the allegations against his opinions be just, he is always most happy and thankful to receive correction; and if they are unjust, he has the happiness to know, that his sentiments are *so far* incontrovertibly true. It is thus that good must every way result to the candid mind from intellectual exercise, and fair, manly discussion.

And here we may be allowed to add, that our end in this publication is, to lead our fellow immortals to give their serious attention to the doctrines of the *New Christian Church*, as set forth in the writings of that every way eminent and excellent man, EMANUEL SWEDENBÖRG. Being conscientiously impressed that they merit this attention, it is our obvious duty, upon the express Christian principle, "freely ye

have received, freely give," to recommend this system, cordially, zealously, and diligently to the notice of those who are altogether unacquainted with it, or who are acquainted with it only by public report, or through mediums by which it has been sedulously misrepresented. Not even the belief of others that what we offer is not of the value we assign to it, can justify our relaxing our own obligation of duty, so long as we are of a different opinion. Such, then, being the end we have in view, and which we are bound in duty to promote, it necessarily becomes our duty to promote it by all such lawful means as we deem most effectual for our purpose. This leads, of course, to the further obligation to place the *disadvantages* of other systems of religious belief, as contrasted with that which we deem to be THE TRUTH, in the *strongest possible point of view*, consistent with candour and fidelity. And does not the adherent of every other system feel himself bound in conscience to take the same course? Let not us then be blamed for our honesty, and for exercising that zeal which is inseparable from a Christian regard to the happiness and well-being of others. If our end be admitted to be blameless, let not our resorting to the means which we judge necessary to its accomplishment, be condemned. Let not our freedom in exposing discrepancies in systems we deem erroneous, and therefore injurious, be stigmatized as illiberal. The utmost extent of our fault, if we be deemed faulty, is an error in judgment.

These considerations being duly appreciated, the writer hopes that he shall not be charged either with illiberality, or severity; and that he and the reader shall travel onward together *on good terms*. There can be no illiberality felt towards the individual holder of erroneous opinions, while it is believed that he may, notwithstanding his mistakes, be an ornament to society, and a friend to his God (John xv. 14). For himself the writer must declare, that almost under any form, he regards Christianity as a blessing to the individual, and to society, because, whatever its errors, it gives access to its pure moral precepts, and its cheering divine promises.

This being premised, however plainly the assumed errors of a *class* may be dealt with, the reader may always confidently persuade himself that we are willing to regard him personally as an *exception* to those of his class who are

misled into evil, by the *necessarily* bad tendency of error. Whenever such exceptions are admitted by an assailant of a *class*, he himself must regard *every individual* of that class, *personally considered*, as such an exception, unless he has personal evidence to the contrary: and let it be remembered, that it requires first to be proved, that individuals are entitled to a particular *personal* estimation and respect *merely because they belong* to a particular class, before they are at liberty to take to themselves, personally and individually, the objections which are urged *generally* against the principles and practices of their class. Respect is a *purely personal* matter, and so likewise is disrespect; and since no one would be so absurd as to claim to himself, as a matter of course, the virtues of eminent individuals of his class; so neither let him be so inconsistent as to take to himself personally, the allegations of bad qualities which are brought against others of his class, but, confessedly, not against all, as arising from the errors they have imbibed.

In regard to the objection against the use of "severity" in denouncing opinions deemed erroneous:—if the opinions be not distorted in the statement of them, and are fairly *proved* to be erroneous, and if the alleged bad tendency of them be taken with the above qualification, *they cannot be too severely handled*. The physician who desires to cure a disease, always looks the mischief and danger of it full in the face. He believes that he could not do a greater injustice to his patient, than to hide from himself the extent of the danger, for fear of alarming the subject of it, by having to state to him *its full extent*, in order to justify the strictness, severity, and self-denial of his prescriptions!

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For the guidance of some readers we add, that, however numerous the various Christian sects may be in their minuter subdivisions, *there are in fact only three grand divisions*, and which are clearly distinguishable from each other by the *essential* differences in their ideas respecting the Object, or Objects (!) of religious or Christian worship: the inequality in the numbers of their respective adherents, does not at all affect the propriety of this division of opinions. These three divisions are the following:—

1. The TRINITARIAN churches, *who worship THREE Objects of worship*—TWO INVISIBLE, and ONE VISIBLE: the two INVISIBLE are called the Father and the Holy Spirit, or the *first* and *third* Divine Persons, Individuals, or Agents; and the visible is called the Son, or *second* Divine Person, who was, and still is, manifested in the flesh.\*

2. The UNITARIAN churches, who worship ONE INVISIBLE OBJECT OF WORSHIP, called the Father, offering no religious worship to the Son, He being considered a creature, whom to worship as God would be idolatry.

3. The NEW CHRISTIAN CHURCH *signified by the "New Jerusalem"* in the Revelation, whose members worship ONE VISIBLE GOD, and thus ONE *Visible Object of worship*, even THE VISIBLE DIVINE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST; Him they regard as the Eternal Invisible Father brought forth to view† in a Divine-Human Personal Form, and which, in reference to its birth of the virgin, is called "the Only Begotten Son of God." They believe that the Human Nature thus assumed by Jehovah, entirely and gradually divested Itself of the infirmity It inherited from the mother, and in the same degree was perfected and glorified by the Father which dwelt therein; and that this was effected during states of temptation; that human redemption having been completed, and the Humanity "made perfect through suffering" upon the cross, It was "raised from the dead by

\* There are some isolated individuals, particularly amongst the General Baptists, *who worship only Two Persons or Objects of worship*, that is, *One Invisible Divine Being*, called the Father, and also *One Visible Being*, (created, and therefore finite in himself, but *possessing a derived Divinity*,) called the Son. These are called *high* Arians, but they are *properly classed with UNITARIANS*, for there can be no *essential* difference between a finite being *however exalted*, and any other finite being whatever. To offer *religious* worship to a *creature* under any possible modifications, and *however exalted* he may be, is *nothing less than idolatry*. Those who offer worship to the Son, *not as religious worship*, but as *personal honour*, believing the Son to be a creature not entitled to receive *religious* worship, are called *low* Arians. A *vast number* who call themselves Trinitarians would, *if closely scrutinized*, be found to be *either high or low Arians*, that is, Unitarians in disguise.

† See John i. 18 (in the original), and compare with ch. xiv. 7—9.

the glory of the Father," being then wholly Divine and One with the Father; that the relation of the Father and Son is like the relation of the soul and body in man, and in this sense they adopt the declaration in the Athanasian creed, "*for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, SO God and Man is one Christ.*" Thus according to the faith of the New Christian church, the Divine Trinity consists, 1, of the Father or Divine Soul; 2, of the Son or Humanity in which the Divine Soul is manifested as in its own Body; and 3, of the Holy Spirit which proceeds from the Divine Humanity or Body as a Divine Emanation, and which may be regarded as corresponding to the *operation* which proceeds unitedly from the soul and body of a man. Hence it appears, that the idea of the Trinity is simply this, that the Father dwells *entirely and only* in the Son, so that no man can come to the Father except by the Son;\*" and that from the Son, or Humanity, who is our Lord Jesus Christ, proceeds the Holy Spirit.†

Which of these three *essentially differing classes of Christian believers and worshipers* is in accordance with the Scriptures; and which, in fact, are Christian Idolaters (!) and which are not; the reader is deeply interested in determining *aright*: and he *must* determine it *for himself*, for no one can determine it for him. True Religion consists in charity, faith, and good works, and therefore true religion is a *strictly personal* affair. And since religion is a purely individual concern, it is obvious, that no man can determine another man's faith for him, for this would be the same as being religious by proxy, which is the same as being sanctified and saved by proxy! A religious faith can only be really and beneficially chosen by the free and conscientious exercise of the individual's own powers of choice and judgment.

In order to induce the reader to exercise this right and

\* See John xiv. 6.

† THUS it clearly appears that "*in Jesus Christ dwelleth ALL the fulness of the Godhead bodily,*" and "*all the fulness of the Godhead*" must include *all that is Divine*, and consequently THE WHOLE Divine Trinity. The reader will do well to consider seriously the express declarations of the Apostle in Col. i. 19, and ii. 9.

duty of judgment and choice wisely and firmly, the following judicious remarks of Dr. Abercrombie are presented to his notice.

"In the formation of opinions various errors are committed. There is a listless vacuity of mind which prevents it from being directed with attention or interest to the formation of *defined* opinions, even on subjects of supreme importance. There is a servility of mind, which leaves it *the slave of mere authority*, without forming opinions for itself by personal inquiry. A regulated mental discipline enables us to approach every subject *with a sincere and humble desire for truth*; to give its *due influence to authority* without being blindly led by it; to give its *due weight to every kind of evidence* without partial views, or imperfect examination; and to direct the *whole powers*—not to favour, establish, or overturn particular opinions, but *honestly and anxiously to discover—WHAT IS TRUTH.*"

"As intellectual and moral agents, the great agent by which we are acted upon is TRUTH. Truth derives its power from evidence; but for the operation of the laws of evidence, *a suitable state of the mind itself is required*, and without this, even the *best evidence* may be deprived of its power to produce conviction! The result of evidence upon the mind depends *on close and continued attention*. . . . The chief source of unbelief on the greatest of all subjects, is generally to be found in a previous moral corruption of the mind. *It arises from no defect of evidence, but from a state of mind on which the highest evidence falls without power.*"

"Beware of a nominal acquiescence in certain [alleged] truths, because you have been taught them in your infancy, or because they are the established creed of those with whom you are connected. Study the subject *for yourselves*. Study it in a regular and connected manner; and let every step be a matter of close and serious personal inquiry. Study it under a deep sense of its supreme importance, and with an anxious desire that the opinions you form shall be *consistent with truth*, and shall embrace *the whole truth*: and, finally, study it with a devout reliance on a light and influence from above. It is the part of a well-regulated mind not only to know truths, but to know the grounds on which they are believed to be true. "*Be able to give a reason for the hope that is in you.*"

To these forcible remarks we add, that the reader will do well, in going through the following pages, and deciding on the validity of the reasons presented to him, to bear in mind the following fundamental truths: GOD IS ONE;—*and*,—GOD IS GOOD. Whatever *does not agree* with these fundamentals of all *genuine* religious truth, or whatever requires sophistical qualification to make it agree with them, CANNOT BE TRUE. Let the reader take this unerring touchstone in his hand, *and fearlessly apply it*, remembering the words of the poet:

Seize upon truth where'er 'tis found,  
Amongst your friends, amongst your foes,  
On Christian, or on heathen ground:—  
The flower's divine where'er it grows.

Let him also profit by the following judicious remarks of Doctor Watts.

“For the most part people are born to their opinions, and never question the truth of what their family, or their country, or their party profess. They clothe their minds as they do their bodies, after the fashion in vogue; not one of a hundred ever examines his principles! Persons are applauded for *presuming* that they are in the right, and, as Mr. Locke says, he that considers and inquires into the *reason* of things, is counted a foe to orthodoxy, because, possibly, he may deviate from some of the *received* doctrines. And thus men, without any industry or acquisition of their own, lazy and idle as they are, inherit *local* truths, or the truths of that place where they live, and are inured to *assent without evidence*! This has a long and an unhappy influence; for if a man can once bring his mind to be positive and fierce for propositions *whose evidence he has never examined*, he will naturally follow this short and easy way of judging and believing, and build all his opinions on insufficient grounds!”

In conclusion to the above prefatory remarks, we observe, that several opponents of the New Church system of Doctrine have written against it, regardless of previous Defences of it against previous attacks, and previous refutations of the identical objections which they have



reiterated, apparently in utter ignorance of former attacks, and former replies. But henceforth let no opponent presume to attack the New Doctrine until he has first obviated all the objections brought against his own in the following pages. Should, however, any unreasonable zealot pour out his wrath against that which he is predetermined not to understand, except so far as is requisite to help him to mis-represent it,—a very common case hitherto,—let this reply be sufficient for him:—"Prove that Job Abbott's objections to *your own* Doctrine are unfounded before you indulge the fruitless expectation, that your rash and one-sided denunciations will prevent those who have heard both sides of the question from attending to those objections. Until you have done this, you do not come into the court of reason and justice with clean hands, and therefore your plea ought to be disregarded. Remember the following words of your Saviour, which afford us an admirable rule, and one which is equally applicable to guide our administration of *intellectual*, as well as moral correction. 'Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite! first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.' If you are ignorant that any mote exists as an impediment to your intellectual vision, read Job Abbott's objections to your doctrine, and if you are still unable to find the 'mote,' verily you must be blind indeed!"

In the Defences of the New Church hitherto published, their talented authors have principally applied themselves to vindicate her members from the calumnious charges brought against the Doctrines which they believe and receive. In the present work, the writer has undertaken to *justify them in respect to that which they disbelieve and reject*. This he hopes will be received by his brethren as a satisfactory apology for the addition he has presumed to make to the numerous able and conclusive Defences of the Doctrines of the New Church, already in their possession.

# JOB ABBOTT;

OR,

## REASONS, &c.

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BEFORE we enter upon our "Reasons" for abandoning certain systems of religious doctrine, we think it may be well to offer some remarks in defence of such changes generally.

We not unfrequently find an adherence to the religious opinions in which a person has been educated, applauded as something exceedingly meritorious, while the abandonment of them is stigmatized as if it were a proof of weakness, if not of wickedness. And supposing a person not only to abandon "the religion of his forefathers," but also to see reason afterwards to change his newly-adopted sentiments, the admirers of "things as they are," are ready to regard such an "apostate" as little better than a pest and outcast of society; nay, more, some persons will even speak of such an individual as if he had set a worse example to his fellow-creatures than the drunkard or the brawler. "But is there no merit then, it may be asked, in consistency?" Undoubtedly there is, if by consistency be meant consistency of conduct, as implying a uniform adherence, in practice, to the principles professed. This, assuredly, is the highest degree of merit. Until finite creatures, how-

ever, are proved to be infallible in their judgment; until it can be demonstrated that the first opinion formed must, of necessity, be right,—BECAUSE it is the first formed, *there can be no merit in never changing an opinion.* And, indeed, it appears to be one of the tricks to which fallen man is prone to have recourse,—to give to things not really praiseworthy, names and descriptions which imply that they are so. Thus a bigoted, obstinate, and even stupid adherence to an opinion, for no better reason than its long standing, is dignified with the well-sounding appellation of “consistency of opinion!” But “*He who never changed any of his opinions* (says an old proverb), *never corrected any of his mistakes.*” This sentiment is well worthy of remembrance. Every one admits readily enough that man is liable to fall into mistakes, but almost every one appears to be inclined to plead an exemption from error in *his own particular case.* *Faults* he may have, but as to being in error, it is quite an affront to suppose such a thing.

Propositions are often assented to in the gross, while they are denied in detail, as if a general statement could be true, while all the particulars which are involved in it are untrue. If we,—if the whole human race,—are *indeed* very liable to error, it must almost follow, of necessity, that every individual will fall into an inaccurate way of thinking in *some* particular. But how can mistakes be corrected if they are never to be examined. And how can an examination of an opinion commence, until so much of mistrust of our judgment is admitted, as implies the *possibility* of being in the wrong? And why not be wrong in our interpretation of Scripture as well as in any thing else?

We do not find that persons feel themselves bound rigidly to adhere to any particular opinion in science, or in the arts connected with the business of life, because a due regard to self-interest naturally suggests that bigotry, in these departments of human knowledge, might be followed by injurious consequences. Others, less attached to existing opinions, might take the lead of the unchangeables, and secure to themselves the advantages which result from new discoveries and improvements, leaving the old-fashioned thinkers to enjoy their firmly fixed opinions, in poverty, contempt, and pity! But, it may be objected to this, that

in science we have no fixed standard of opinion, while in religion we have an infallible one,—the Word of God. In reply to this, it may be observed, that it is in *this* way that one thing is dexterously substituted for another, in support of fallacious views. Our question is not whether the Word of God is infallible or not; undoubtedly *it contains* infallible divine truth: our question is concerning opinions and inferences *formed from it*, which involve either a just, or an unjust *interpretation* of it. Indeed, there is here some analogy between the book of nature and the book of revelation. The former is not more liable to be misinterpreted by false views of science, than the latter by false views of religion. But it may be said, in reference to the Scriptures, that God has promised that “to the meek he will teach his way.” Are we then quite sure that we are *meek enough* to entitle us to receive the promised teaching? Besides, the Divine teaching of the Holy Spirit is never communicated separately from the ordinary means of instruction and improvement, dispensed through the medium of those who have profited from the aggregate wisdom of living and departed intelligence.

What reliance is to be placed on doctrinal interpretations merely because they are *ancient*? Some Protestants are great admirers of “consistency of opinion,” but what consistency of this kind was shewn by the Protestant reformers, when they boldly challenged the Romish Church with having lapsed into deadly errors? And is it not possible that some of these errors may yet remain unremoved? Is it quite certain that the Athanasian Creed, for instance, with all its unintelligible asseverations, deserved to be saved out of the immense stock of Roman Catholic legends? What said “the great Lord Chatham,” of the church by law established?—“That it had a Popish liturgy, a Calvinistic creed, and an Arminian clergy!” If this be a testimony, not to be despised, it is difficult to see what merit there can be in adhering without investigation, to “the religion of one’s forefathers,” since it is impossible to make any thing more of such an adherence than an obstinate attachment to opinions, *whether they be right, or whether they be wrong!* At any rate, it is impossible to reconcile this mis-called “consistency” with the Apostle’s injunction, “*Prove all*

*things: hold fast that which is good.*" Nor is it more agreeable to his commendation of the *Bereans* for searching the Scriptures of the Old Testament, in order to ascertain whether *his own* conclusions and statements from them were accurate. (Acts xvii. 11.)

But let it not be imagined that we advocate a change of religious opinions from mere fickleness, or fondness for change, or what is even worse than this, from interested considerations, or from merely *personal* feelings, either friendly to the new, or hostile to the old, party. *The right and reasonableness to make a change in religious opinions, however frequently it may be exercised, is all that we contend for, and with this important proviso, that the change be made conscientiously and judiciously.* When a man comes to mature age, it is not only his *right* to examine whether his educational religion be accurately drawn from Scripture or not, but it is also *his solemn duty* to do so, and thus to apply to their destined purpose the talents committed to his trust by his Creator. What could be said in favour of such an address as this to the Giver of all wisdom? "I will diligently use my rational powers to promote my worldly advantage, but *I will not use them at all in the pursuit of religious truth, nor to the advancement of my mind in intelligence in spiritual things.*" And yet this seems clearly to be involved in what is commonly called "consistency of opinion," as meaning an implicit adherence to the opinions of those who have gone before us, without the exercise of our own powers of reason and judgment upon them. Admitting even the system of divinity thus implicitly adopted on the authority of others to be altogether sound, as regards the unthinking adherent to it individually, it is nothing better to him than "man-made divinity," for it is adopted from a blind confidence in the supposed infallibility of fallible creatures, without any examination, worthy of the name, into its grounds and evidences.

It sometimes happens that the noisiest partizans of the Bible and "the religion of our ancestors," are precisely the persons who are least acquainted with the sacred records from personal inspection. If their own attachment to the Bible were to be tested by their ability or qualification to

join in the particular expressions of attachment to God's truth which are to be found in the 119th Psalm,—an attachment arising from diligent study and delighted meditation,—their zeal would very frequently be found to consist in mere words, deriving a sort of galvanic life from the excitement of self-will and the love of dominion.

We hope, then, that we have reconciled the reader to a conscientious change taking place in a person's religious opinions, and that he is convinced, that such a change may be altogether reasonable and legitimate, provided it be conscientious. By way of fortifying the conclusion that such a change may be perfectly justifiable, we will cite another proverb,—and proverbs are to a considerable extent the concentration of the common sense of mankind ;—"Wise men change their minds, *but fools—NEVER!*"

We now present to the reader's notice the rather remarkable individual, whose name stands at the head of this publication, in order to afford an illustration of the progress and change of opinion on the all-important subjects of religious doctrine.

Job Abbott was a native of a village in Leicestershire. The circumstances of his parents did not admit of his receiving much education, and he was not taught to write until after his arrival at maturity, through the kind instruction of a fellow-workman. He was brought up a stocking-maker, and being of a nervous and weakly constitution, he could never earn an average amount of wages in that ill-paid employment. But, in truth, Job had a soul too active, and a mind too large, for his body. He thirsted for knowledge, and so far as his scanty means allowed him to do so, he diligently applied himself to the improvement of his mind. Books he had no money to buy, and therefore was constrained to borrow them wherever he could ; and in order to help his memory, he used to make copious *extracts, or copies, from them*, and that principally during the night, after a hard day's work. He was particularly attached to the study of astronomy, and having borrowed some books relating to that science, he made copies from them, and by the help of

the diagrams they contained, he used to pass his nights frequently in the open air, watching the motions of the heavenly bodies. This, after a hard day's sedentary toil, shewed his invincible zeal to obtain a practical knowledge in his favourite pursuit; and the result was, that persons competent to form a judgment, declared that Job Abbott possessed sufficient knowledge to qualify him for a popular lecturer on astronomy, had he also possessed the necessary requisite of language and manner for its public communication. He was possessed of a remarkably retentive memory. Having so much knowledge of music as to be able to read it readily at sight, he was accustomed to copy sacred tunes and pieces; and after copying a book in four parts, all the parts were distinctly impressed upon his memory; as, likewise, were the hymns or words sung to the music, merely from his joining in the use of them, with his friends, or with the religious body with which he was accustomed to worship. Being able also to recollect with facility various anecdotes and statements which he had read (for, considering his contracted circumstances, his reading was remarkably extensive), he was an agreeable and instructive companion, more especially as in conversation he was never forward or intrusive. It may readily be concluded from this brief description of his character, taste, and habits, that Job found himself confined, by his poverty, to a sphere of life by no means congenial to him. He lived, however, in a world of his own,—a world of clear thought and intelligence, which had nothing in common with the coarseness, sensuality, and ignorance, which were often forced upon his notice by those with whom he was constrained by his occupation to mingle. But as their habits were not attractive to him, the evil of their example was not productive of any effect upon him but that of exciting his pity or disgust. No man was more distinguished for purity of life, propriety of discourse, or prudence of behaviour, than our humble friend JOB ABBOTT. At early periods of his mature life, the annoyance which low-mindedness in others caused him made him rather irritable; but he learned patiently to endure ills which he could not avoid, and to bear with the follies of those around him with an inward feeling of pity, and an outward demeanour of dignified calmness, which

ensured general respect. Hence it was a universal impression with those with whom he was associated, that he was a remarkably respectable person. Indeed, in all his little transactions, he had the nicest sense of honour. He was also free from the failings common to those with whom a little knowledge is really a dangerous thing. He never shewed any wish or endeavour to shine before less informed individuals. He was the very opposite to the very sorry character amongst mechanics,—a public-house oracle!

Having, then, made the reader somewhat acquainted with the personal character of our friend, we have now to put him in possession of his religious experience, as connected with the changes which successively took place in his religious opinions.

Job Abbott was an attendant upon the established church until he arrived at mature age, when he was attracted by the apparent earnestness and zeal of the New Connexion of General Baptists, and became a convert to their peculiar doctrine concerning Baptism. This doctrine we shall proceed to give in the words of the Rev. Dan Taylor (one of their founders who was considered as the head of the connexion) as contained in his "*Confession of Faith*," recently circulated, and stated to be "approved and adopted by the New Connexion of General Baptists."\* But before we

\* This *New Connexion* separated from the *Old General Baptists*, that is, from the churches in that body which had lapsed into Unitarian opinions; and on June 6, 1770, those who adhered to the doctrine of the *vicarious sacrifice* sent a deputation to the General Assembly of the *Old Connexion*, to notify the fact, and the causes of their separation, "and, in a friendly manner, to bid them farewell;"—a very commendable example of moderation under the widest difference of sentiment. The term *General Baptist* implies the belief that *mankind in general*, and not merely a certain portion, were redeemed, and consequently, that all *may* be saved, and thus that all have free-will. But it is not easy to reconcile this belief with the practice at prayer-meetings amongst General Baptists, as well as Methodists, who are also *General Redemptionists*; for at these meetings, especially at "revival" meetings, the *Calvinistic election* principle,—that *God can convert sinners even against their will*,—is openly avowed, and acted upon, by offering up the most vehement and protracted entreaties, that God will *compel* sin-



proceed to cite the *Baptist* "Confession of Faith," it may be well to observe, that although the description of various portions of this document necessarily occupies so prominent a place in these pages, the intelligent reader will readily perceive, that the belief which is therein set forth does not differ from that of *Wesleyans, Calvinists, Calvinistic or Particular Baptists, and Evangelicals*, in respect to the following *leading*, and what are deemed *essential* points of doctrine,—the separate individuality of the Son of God; the punishment of the Son of God in man's place; praying to the Father for the sake of the Son; the personal and literal intercession of the Son with the Father; justification by faith *only*; the general judgment; and the resurrection of dead bodies. The discussion of the creed of the General Baptists is, therefore, at the same time, a discussion of the religious doctrines of all who profess "Evangelical principles," and who are said to be agreed in what they are pleased to call "the essentials of the gospel." It is also a discussion of the XXXIX. Articles of the Established Church, which agree with this formulary except upon the subjects of Baptism and Predestination.\* Another reason

ners to come in, by *making them willing*, by the exercise of his sovereign power and irresistible grace. It appears to be thought, that nothing more is necessary in order to procure the conversion of sinners, than to get the Almighty *into the mind* to effect it; and this therefore is attempted to be done by means of an extravagance of excitement and vociferation in prayer, which is as little compatible with rationality and propriety, or even sanity, as it is with the belief in free-will.

\* Concerning the Thirty-nine Articles, we must subjoin an estimate of them by the celebrated *Jeremy Bentham*, as given by Dr. Southwood Smith, in his Lecture over his remains. "The time came, (at the University of OXFORD), for my attaching my signature to the XXXIX. Articles. Understanding the object of such signature was the declaring, after due reflection, that the propositions therein contained were, in my opinion, every one of them, true, it seemed to me a matter of duty to examine them first, in order to see if that were really the case. The examination was unfortunate; in some of them no meaning at all could I find; in others no meaning but what was irreconcilable with Scripture and reason. Communicating my distress to some of my fellow-collegiates, I found them sharers in it. Upon inquiry it was found, that

why this Confession of Faith is so often cited is, that it not only affords a *definite* ground for questioning erroneous doctrines, mistakenly called "evangelical," but it meets a difficulty which has been found to arise from this circumstance, that "believers," when pressed by argument, are wont to *deny* that they *individually* believe, and even sometimes to deny, that *their party* believe, the doctrine called into question.

The distinguishing tenet of the Baptists is thus stated in the above named Confession:—"Baptism is designed to be a standing memorial and emblematical representation of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of our recovery from a death in sin to a spiritual and holy life by Him; and also to denote our surrendering of ourselves up entirely to his service. The only scriptural way of administering this ordinance is,—to immerse the person in water; and the only scriptural subjects are those that repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." On this article we make the following observations, as expressing the views of it entertained by Job Abbott, after he had adopted the doctrines of the New Christian Church.

An abundance of ingenuity and research has been displayed on both sides of the question by the Pædobaptists (or *child* baptizers), and the Baptists (or baptizers of *adults* only). And some candid persons are inclined to think, that, in no theological controversy, the arguments from the Bible have been more nearly balanced.

The great antiquity of child-baptizing is, however, fully established. Independently of less conclusive notices of an earlier date, Justyn Martyr and Irenæus in the *second* century, and Origen in the *beginning* of the *third*, expressly mention infant-baptism as the constant practice of their

among the Fellows of the College there was one whose office it was to remove all such scruples. We repaired to him with fear and trembling. His answer was cold, and the substance of it was,—that it was not for uninformed youths such as we, to presume to set up our private judgments against a public one, formed by some of the holiest, as well as best and wisest men that ever lived." Now, we ask the reader, what must be the character of a formulary which could command no better defence than this, from an official whose duty it was to explain it?

times. The question whether infants may be baptized before the *eighth* day, (that being the day on which circumcision was required to be performed,) was considered in an African synod (held A. D. 254), at which sixty-six bishops were present, who agreed unanimously that it was not necessary to defer baptism to that day. The immersion of infants still prevails in the East, and the *present* rubrick of the Established Church in England directs that the minister, "if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it, shall *dip* it in the water;" but this practice has not been in use during the last 200 years.\* The capacious fonts, large enough for dipping, may still be seen in many churches in the country.

Happily the long and bitterly-disputed point about Baptism has now been finally settled by a Divine authority, by means of "the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem," as presented to the world in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. This point being one on which the Scriptures are not so explicit as to preclude controversy between equally candid and sincere minds, it might, but for this manifestation of divine mercy, have remained in endless and hopeless litigation. What these doctrines set forth on the subject of Baptism will appear from the following statements, taken substantially from the writings of Swedenborg, and especially from his *True Christian Religion*, n. 676, 677, 678.

Baptism was instituted in the place of circumcision, and is a sign and memorial that the person receiving it should be purified from evil, and also that he belongs to the Christian Church. This sign is perceived as a mark of distinction in the spiritual world, and is there regarded by the attendant angels who witness it, as the pledge of a Christian education; and thus it is intended to guide them in operating on the minds of infants; their operation on the minds of heathen and Christian infants being necessarily different, because of their different circumstances. On Christian children the angels will operate to the end that

\* On this subject consult Bishop Tomlin on the XXXIX. Articles, under Art. XXVII.

they may receive *faith in the Lord*, and *by means* of that faith, be subsequently introduced to a state of genuine Christian or *spiritual* good; but on heathen children they will operate not to the end that they may receive faith, for that is impossible in the absence of Christian instruction, but that they may receive gentile good, which is an inferior or *natural* good, such as the religious principles of their parents are capable of introducing them to, but which, after death, may be united with faith, through angelic instruction, and thus acquire some degree of spirituality. Were it not for the protection afforded by the sign of Baptism, some Mahometan or idolatrous spirit, might injuriously apply itself to new-born Christian infants, and also to children, and infuse into them an inclination in favour of his religion, and so draw away their minds and alienate them from Christianity. So soon, then, as infants are baptized, they are introduced, as to their spirits, into the *Christian* heaven, and are placed under the guardianship of angels, *by whom they are kept in a state favourable to their receiving faith in the Lord*. But as they grow up, and become capable of thinking and acting for themselves, the guardian angels leave them, and they draw into association with them such spirits as make one with their life and faith. *Hence it is evident that Baptism is an insertion amongst Christians, even in the spiritual world:*

To these statements it may be added, that *the water used in baptism is a symbol of the truths of faith, and washing thereby is representative of purification from spiritual defilements*: and whether the water be applied in the way of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, thus whether it be applied to the whole body, or only to the head as being that part of the body which corresponds to the governing principle of the mind and life, BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL OF THE PURIFICATION OF THE HEART BY FAITH AND OBEDIENCE.—It is clear that with those *who are able to believe these statements*, as was the case with our friend, Job Abbott, the vexatious controversy about baptism is satisfactorily settled for ever. We add, with feelings of pain, that it is also clear, *how great an injury the Baptists unknowingly inflict upon the souls of their children, by depriving them of the benefit of that PECULIAR and most privileged angelic*

*guardianship, which has been provided by the love of their God and Saviour for the children of CHRISTIAN parents.*

In respect to the "emblematical representation" traced by the Baptists in this ceremonial, the applicability of it depends entirely upon the use of immersion, without which the representation could not be sustained. No wonder, then, that they regard the mode of immersion as of so great importance. But is it likely that the Lord Jesus Christ, who was so precise in the construction of his parables, would have left it matter of conjecture and dispute, whether baptism *absolutely* means immersion or not, if he had meant that by the dipping the head under water, should be represented his death, and by the lifting it up again, his resurrection? and, at the same time, our dying to sin, and rising again to righteousness? The Lord Himself has given no authority for *this* representation; and it rests entirely upon what Job subsequently deemed a somewhat irreverent and childish application of Romans vi. 4. It is at best an *arbitrary* simile, which they adopt; while the New-Church representation is founded upon a *fixed and permanently existing relation between natural things and uses, and spiritual things and uses*. It is according to *this* representation (of the purification of the mind and life by means of revealed truth) that the Apostle argues, that in our baptism it was symbolically set forth, that we should cease to serve sin, and become dead to evil influences, and thereby become the Lord's servants, and live unto him; and we are said to be baptized with him, to be crucified with him, and to be raised from the dead with him, because of the strict analogy which exists between his sufferings, temptations, and *glorification*, and the sufferings, temptations, and *regeneration* of his faithful followers.

Our friend took with him into the Baptist connexion a belief in the Orthodox doctrine of a *Trinity of Divine Persons* in the Godhead; but he had come amongst a people with whom the question between the Trinitarians and Arians is altogether unsettled, and consequently is liable to continual oscillation. This will appear from a further citation from the aforesaid *Confession of Faith*. "The Scriptures give us a *clear account* that God is *One*,—yet there are

*Three* represented, by the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who have communion in one Godhead, and have proper Deity ascribed to them all. But I cannot find (continues Dan Taylor) that any man has yet learned from Scripture to describe *how these three are united in one Godhead, nor the exact modes of their distinction*; nor do I pretend to give an *exact* account of this mystery. As I do not find them called in Scripture *Three Persons*, I do not choose to call them so *myself*: but I neither wish to condemn nor to contend with those who think it proper to use this manner of speech."

This statement, while it appears very liberal and candid, is, nevertheless, sufficiently *loose*; and the reader will not be surprised to find, that the effect of it has been the prevalence of an uncertain and indefinite way of thinking and believing among General Baptists, or that the liberty thus given has become an inlet to differences of sentiment concerning the Divine Nature, and the person of the adorable Saviour, both amongst ministers and people. The natural consequence of an attempt to comprise in one religious body persons of such differing opinions concerning the object of their common worship must be this, that there will be found therein Trinitarians, Arians, and even Unitarians, or those whose mode of thinking agrees essentially with the doctrine of the inferiority and subordination of the Son,—as a distinct Individual Being,—to the Father,—as another distinct Individual Being; and such is found to be actually the case. Some hold distinctly the orthodox or Trinitarian doctrine of a Trinity of *co-equal* Divine Persons; others believe the Father to be the *supreme* God, and the Son *not* the *supreme* God, but nevertheless God, and consequently an *inferior* God (!) being the possessor of a secondary but derived *Personal* Divinity (!) and, consequently, that both Father and Son are distinct Agents, independently of each other, each having his own individual divine will and intelligence; while the Holy Ghost is regarded either as altogether undefinable, or as some peculiar mode of operation carried on by the *Supreme* God, called the Father. The latter opinion may be denominated "High Arianism."

Our friend Job Abbott, as already remarked, on first becoming a Baptist, agreed in opinion with the Trinitarian

portion of the connexion ; but subsequently he became of the Arian opinion as held by others, first a High, and afterwards a Low Arian, approaching to a Unitarian.

Now the reader will be pleased to remember, that a creed professedly taken from the Scripture, may be really inconsistent with it, and nevertheless quite consistent *with itself*. Although the Trinitarian creed is as inconsistent with itself as it is with the Scripture, such is not so much the case with the Arian creed, and still less with the Unitarian ; for both these creeds, while they are consistent with themselves, are farther from the *very words* of Scripture than even the Trinitarian. We say the *very words*, for the Trinitarian agreement with the Scripture is rather apparent than real : there is an agreement between the words of Scripture and a part of the words of the creed, but not between the Scripture and the ideas actually suggested by the creed, as actually entertained by Trinitarians. Persons of this denomination with apparent reverence CALL Jesus " God," and so far they agree with the *words* of Scripture which give Him the incommunicable Divine attributes ; but they do not *think of Him* as actually being the One and *Only* God, and consequently *not really* as the *True* God, who is One and Indivisible, but they think of Him as being One out of three parts or portions of God, called Persons, and indeed as an inferior Person or portion. Thus while *with their lips* they *confess* the Divinity of the Lord Jesus, *with the thoughts of their heart* they deny it ! This practice of *thinking* one thing, and *saying* another, is, in fact, enjoined by the Athanasian or Trinitarian creed, in the following words : " We are compelled by the *Christian verity* to acknowledge [*that is to think*] every Person BY HIMSELF to be God and Lord ; but we are forbidden by the Catholic Religion [*that is, the Catholic Church*] TO SAY that there be three Gods or three Lords"!! Since, then, the *real* faith of a man is formed not of his mere words, but of his ideas of thought, it follows, that as Trinitarians do really think each Person *by Himself* to be God and Lord, they do *really* believe in three Gods and three Lords ! And so Job Abbott saw clearly in his own case, when he began conscientiously to examine whether he did really *think* of three Gods, while he *professed* to believe only in One. But we are anticipating our narrative.

Our friend being now amongst a people who, on the subject of the Trinity, to a certain extent, practised the liberal proverb, "think and let think," gradually was led to perceive the incongruities and impossibilities involved in the belief of Three co-equal Divine Persons. He found the attempt perfectly ineffectual, to draw a *clear line of distinction* between Three Gods; and Three Persons each by Himself God and Lord, or what is the same, Three distinct Divine Personal Agents, perfectly independent of each other, for without such independence neither of them could be God at all.

The attempt to draw such a line only served to involve his mind in distress, confusion, and distraction, as it had done the mind of the good Doctor Watts before him, according to his well-known confession at the latter period of his life.\* In his trouble of mind he consulted a friend, who procured him a copy of a work which is circulated by "*The Society for promoting Christian knowledge*," at the head of which are the Bishops, called, "*The Catholic doctrine of a Trinity*," by the Rev. W. Jones, (hence frequently distinguished from other clergymen of the same name, by the title of "Trinity Jones"). This he read with the greatest attention, and his conclusion upon it was, that it only made confusion worse confounded. He wondered, indeed, that men of learning should unite to circulate a work so full of contradictions, and at the same time so arrogantly dogmatical. At times Job thought that both the writer and the circulators of his book must have been afflicted with monomania on the subject, so insane did its observations appear. To this production, however, he gave a patient reading, and while meditating upon its contents, he could not help contrasting the title of the society with the publication which they circulated. How, said he, can this society promote "*Christian knowledge*" by promulgating contradictory, and therefore impossible, as well as unintelligible, propositions? Can any "*knowledge*" be gained by reading such propositions as these, beyond the fact, that they are contradictory to each other; and therefore that one

\* See his prayer concerning the Trinity, which will be hereafter more specifically referred to.



or other of them *must be false*; and that the attempted amalgamation of the two is a futile absurdity?

Job's attention was particularly arrested by the comments of this Trinitarian writer upon the Scripture phrases, "*Let us make man*;" "*Let us go down*;" "*Who will go for us*;" especially his adoption of a note of Junius and Tremellius on the word "US," which, he says, "contains the substance of *all that can be said* on the occasion." This note is as follows: "*This is a CONSULTATION of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*."—A "*consultation*!" exclaimed our friend, I never heard of any consultation being held but for one purpose, that of getting a better idea of a matter by the parties laying their heads together than each possessed separately; take, for instance, a consultation of physicians: I know no reason why persons should consult together, whether human or divine persons, except upon the principle, that *two heads are better than one*. Can any mortal man imagine any other purpose that can be served by a consultation besides this? But how could *such* a purpose be applicable to an *Infinite* Intelligence, whether it reside in One Person, or in Three? Are we to suppose that *neither* of the three Persons possessed *all* wisdom, and therefore, in order to know how to judge for the best, it was necessary for the *whole Three* to add their several stores together? But how could three non-infinities, or, in other words, three finites, make up One Perfect In-

\* The writer once heard an intelligent member of the Kirk of Scotland suggest another object of the consultations of the Trinity, in a speech addressed to a respectable public assembly. He was setting forth the pleasure of social intercourse and instructive conversation, as an indispensable element of happiness; when he broke out emphatically into the following remark: "Indeed, I could not imagine the Deity Himself as being perfectly happy, if there were only One Person in the Godhead, because he would be constrained of necessity to perpetual solitariness and silence! I perceive that the perfect happiness of the Deity is only secured by there being *three* Persons in the Divine Nature, who may thus enjoy the unspeakable delight of conversing upon the great subjects which engage the attention of an all-perfect Being." This the writer thought a very curious comment on the idea often expressed that a company of just three persons affords the fullest opportunity for conversational enjoyment.

finite? As well might we imagine that three brute animals would make a man! We speak of ONE Perfect Governor of the universe, and call HIM—"HE;" but *which* of the three Persons is meant by "*He*?" Certainly *neither* unless *one* of the Three possesses *all* wisdom, and in this case, either *He alone* is God, and the other two are not *Divine* Persons at all, or else *each* possesses *all* wisdom, and each is God, and so there are three gods, and "*He*" means *either* of these three. But if *neither* possesses *all* wisdom, and in order to the right government of the world, it becomes necessary that all three should consult together, and consider, and find out what is best to be done, then God is not One Indivisible Being, but a Council of Three, and God should not be called He, but IT(!) or THEY! It is only on the principle that each person is *not* "by himself, God and Lord," (as affirmed in *The Athanasian Creed*), and thus not possessed, by Himself, of *all* knowledge, that any "consultation" can be conceived of; for if each, by Himself, is God, and therefore Omniscient, neither of them could communicate to the other any thing *but what He knew before*; and supposing them to talk together in such a case, it would be merely talking for talking's sake. Indeed, if all are perfect, all are perfectly alike, and the thoughts of each must be identical, and each would be moved to utter *them* at the same time and at once, in a unison of words. But in some descriptions of the deliberations of this supposed Divine Council which I have heard, said Job, the three Persons are not only represented as not each possessing individually *all* wisdom, but are so described as if they were, when taken separately, *imperfect*, for they are represented as taking *different views* of the same matter, so that one or other of them must fall short of what is *perfectly* right, which is much the same as being in the wrong.

Our friend then thought over the descriptions he had heard of the Council held by the three Persons in God on the subject of Human Redemption.—It is commonly believed, said Job, that a Council was held *before creation* in anticipation of the fall of man; but some suppose that it took place after the fall. The observations of the *First* Person at this Council are variously described. Some say that He was greatly enraged at the disobedience of Adam,

and therefore condemned all his posterity to hell without exception. Some describe Him as saying, "I made man perfect, and commanded him not to eat of a certain tree, but he has disobeyed my command: I will, therefore, wreak all my fury upon him, and will torment him for ever and ever, and will not pardon him." Others describe Him as saying, "I declared that if man did not obey my command, I would punish him eternally; I *must* keep my word, or I should bring contempt on my Person and government. I wish I could devise some 'scheme' whereby I could consistently with my honour and dignity forgive man; for I must punish him either in person or by proxy: nevertheless I am very sorry for him, and would gladly afford him a way of escape, but I do not see how to reconcile the shewing mercy to him, with justice to myself and my broken laws, except by the vicarious sacrifice or punishment of some competent substitute; therefore, if you, the Second Person, will allow yourself to be punished in man's place, I will cancel my decree against him." Whichever, then, be the accurate description of the declarations of the First Person at this Council, all accounts agree that the Second Person addressed the First, and said; "You demand a substitute to be punished to satisfy your justice; but neither I nor the Third Person make any such demand; on the contrary, I am willing to forgive man his offence against me without a substitute being punished by me, or at my desire, because I do not see that my dignity requires one: and not only so, but I consent to become a man, and, as such, to be punished in man's place, in order to satisfy you, provided you revoke your decree of eternal punishment against man, and accept me as a sacrifice in his place." Those who describe the First person as so exceedingly wrathful, describe the Second as using the most urgent and affecting entreaties that He would lay aside his anger against man, and accept Himself to bear all that anger, and to drink the cup of his fury to the dregs, in man's place. And then the Third Person is described as saying, "I neither demand a substitute, nor will I be one myself; but if you two can agree on the matter, I will, for my part, consent to sanctify all those whom you may choose to forgive." Some say that the First Person would only consent to forgive *a part* of the human

race, called "the elect," and insisted on punishing the rest, as well as punishing his Son; others say that he forgave the whole; but whether He forgave the whole or only a part, all Trinitarians agree, that He declared He would not forgive any at all, unless they should first believe that the Second Person had been punished in their place.

Whatever ideas other people may entertain of what is becoming to a Divine Being, or to a Council of Divine Persons, these descriptions, said Job, do not agree with my ideas of "the fitness of things." To me there is nothing of dignity, nor even of decency in them; there is nothing but the grossest contradictions and absurdities! Whatever may have been meant for Christians to understand by the words "LET Us,"—whether a figurative personification of Divine attributes, or any thing else, such an explanation of the phrase as implies any thing like a "consultation," *must be inaccurate*; especially when the consulting parties, although each of them Divine, and, therefore, perfectly wise in counsel, and unerring in judgment, are so described as to involve a *difference of opinion* amongst them, and are so represented, that if they do not *contradict each other* in words, they do it in *deeds*, by each adopting a different mode, or course, of proceeding! Thus although, as described, they unanimously agree to a certain combined action, the apparent unanimity involves different feelings and views in each party respecting that action; and such is often the case amongst men, especially in regard to the combined action of a giver and receiver.

Such were Job's thoughts on the supposed "consultation" of the supposed three Divine Persons or consulting parties. He saw clearly enough, that, according to the tenor of the observations of the "high contracting parties," all the powers of government are believed to be really and exclusively vested in the *first*, and that the *second* and *third* parties are regarded merely as the shadows of authority; and are complimented as powerful, without any idea being entertained of their possessing *real* power. But it may be well to point out a few more of the strange positions, unreal distinctions, and puerile arguments, in this great Episcopal effort in behalf of a Tripersonality, stating also our friend's thoughts thereon. In giving reasons for abandoning the

Trinitarian doctrine, such a notice, considering the high estimation of the Work amongst Trinitarians, appears not to be unsuitable to the purpose in view. The following passages are therefore selected.

“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself” (2 Cor. v. 19). “The world was reconciled *by* Jesus Christ to the one and supreme God, *BUT* this God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (!) This Scripture considers God as *agent* and *patient* at the same time; as the *reconciler* in the person of the Son, and the object to whom reconciliation was made in the Person of the Father.” Amazing! exclaimed Job; Paul expressly makes God the reconciler, *and the world the reconciled party*; but Mr. Jones, and his supporters, the bishops, can only read the passage through the spectacles of preconceived opinion, and having altogether mistaken the Apostle’s clear meaning, they go on to contradict themselves three times over; and weave such a web of mystery as no eye of reason can penetrate, so as to discern even the least glimmering of light through it! Why did not Mr. Jones, who says *God* means three Persons, affirm, in *this* instance, that three Persons were in Christ reconciling, &c.(!)? This was due to consistency. Elsewhere he says that *three Persons* make One God, or One Divine *Nature*, and he admits that to say that there are *three Divine NATURES*, would be to say that there are three Gods; but is it not evident that three *human* persons will no more make one human *nature*, than they will make one *man*; and, consequently, that the pretended distinction between a Divine Person and a Divine Nature is a distinction only in word? According to Mr. Jones’s reasoning, indeed, every man *ought* to consist of three persons, for he interprets the passage that says man was created in the *likeness* of God (Gen. i. 26) as meaning, “*Let us*” *three Divine Persons* “*make man in our likeness!*” Certainly *one* man, who is *one* person, cannot be made in the likeness of One God who is *three* persons! The natural conclusion is, from the passage as it stands in the Bible, that as man is *one* finite person, and man is in the image of God, God is *One* Infinite Person!

Mr. J. says, “To us there is *One God*, the Father, and

*One Lord, Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. viii. 6). "The Father is *here* not the name of a *Person*, but of a *Nature*, under which, Christ, as God, is comprehended."—Surely, said Job, text and comment were never more strongly opposed to each other, than here, especially when it is remembered that the commentator is a Trinitarian. Mr. Jones appears capriciously to set up terms, and lay them down, just as a disingenuous partizan advocacy requires; in one place the *Father* is a *Person*, which, he says, does not mean a God; while in another place it is a *Nature*, which, he says, *does* mean a God.

Mr. J. says, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). "When Jesus is called the *Son of God*, we understand the *supreme* God [of course as the *Father* of the Son] besides whom there is no other [what! no other *person* than the Father?] But the Person in God whose *Son* Jesus is said to be in *this* place is the *Holy Ghost* [not the *first* but the third Person] by whose power He was begotten of the virgin." So then; said Job, the first Person is *called* the Father of the Son, and is *not*; while the third is *not* called the Father, but actually *is so*! Any one may see that a mode of interpreting the Word of God, which yields *such* a result of nonsense and confusion, both of ideas and terms, cannot possibly be the divinely intended mode of interpreting, and therefore must be inaccurate.

Mr. J. says, "Two Divine Comforters, like two Almighty, would make two Gods." But, said Job, I find it said in another place by Mr. Jones, "Thy Maker is thy Husband:" "Remember thy Creator:"—"Here," says Mr. J., "in the Hebrew, Maker and Husband are both *plural*; and 'it is written, Remember thy Creators.'" Now any one would think that three Creators are as much three Gods as two Comforters, or two Almighties are two Gods!

Mr. J. says, "The *Father* is the author of blessing and preservation: grace and illumination are from the *Son*; and Peace is the gift of the *Spirit*." If so, said Job, why are *all* those gifts, in the prayers of all Trinitarians, supplicated of the first Person only? And why is He supplicated to give "grace and illumination" by the operation of

the *third*, if these are specially the gifts of the second only? Sad inconsistency and confusion!

Mr. J. says, "The terms *God* and *Lord* are the names of a *nature*; but the term *person* belongs only to an *individual*." "The three Persons have each the same *names*, the same *attributes*; the same *counsel* or *will*, and all *concur* in the same acts: they are three *distinct agents*, yet there is but one and the same agency: that which we believe of the Father we are to believe of the Son and Spirit, *without any difference or inequality*." Mr. J. says *here* that the three persons have each the same *names*, while in the next page he says, "The three Persons have but *one* name, and *one* nature!" *Here* he says that *God* and *Lord* are the names of a nature; but in another place he says that "the words *God*, *Lord*, and *Father*, are *sometimes* applied to one *Person*, and sometimes to another; at *other times*, they are not *personal* names, but names of a *Nature*!" *Here* he says that a person is an *individual*: elsewhere, that although the Trinity consists of, and thus is divided into three Individuals, it is an undivided Trinity! *Here* he describes each Person as the Giver of different and specific gifts; and each is said to fill a different office, but we are, nevertheless, to believe *only that* of one, which we believe of the other. As well might we be required to believe and predicate the same qualities, acts, and office, of a priest and a soldier. Each, Mr. J. says, has the same attributes; but surely three possessors of equal Divine attributes must be three Gods, especially when each has also, as it is likewise said, a separate Divine will! What are three Divine individuals, who are perfectly distinct Agents, but three independent Governors of all things?

And is this the *best* that can be said for the incomprehensible doctrine of a Trinity of three persons? Better would it be to say nothing about it; for the more words are wasted in expounding what is unintelligible in order to make it more acceptable, the more apparent will become its unintelligible, and therefore useless character, and thus will it be rendered, by ineffectual explanation, more unacceptable than ever!

On rising from the perusal of this most marvellous mass

of contradictions and incomprehensibilities, our friend exclaimed, with painfully excited feelings, How can I believe in *Three* Infinite and Eternal *Sources* of being! *Three First Causes!* *Three* Divine Agents of *all* good! *Three* persons, *each* possessing *ALL* things! and each, independently of the other, exercising *ALL* power! *Three* givers of *all* good! *Three* Creators! *Three* Preservers!—but only One Redeemer and Saviour! and yet *Three* Sanctifiers and *Three* Givers of grace; and nevertheless but one giver of the Spirit of grace, namely, the *First* Person, He being the Giver of the *Third* Person, through the intercession of the *Second* Person.

Such were the appalling difficulties and contradictions which presented themselves to the mind of our friend, during his studies of the New Testament, and in his meditations on the preaching (*sufficiently various in sentiment*) of the General Baptists. He read in the Scriptures that the Son *could do nothing* OF HIMSELF; that his Word, his doctrine, his wisdom, *were not his own*, but the Father's, and that all things that he possessed had been *given to him* by the Father. He could not see, therefore, how the Father and Son could be two eternal *Persons*, co-EQUAL in the possession of all divine attributes, consistently with these testimonies: he could not imagine how an infinitely wise second person could need *to receive* information from the first! He found, likewise, that individuals who *stated* they believed the *Three* Persons to be *equal* in power and goodness, addressed their prayers *almost exclusively*, and some *entirely*, to the *first* Person, and never to the *third*; thus tacitly implying, that in their hearts, they thought the second and third to be *inferior* in power to the first, and, therefore, *believing* them comparatively powerless, *they passed them by!* Job was too honest *to say* that he believed the *Three* Divine Persons to be *equal*, while, *in his acts or prayers*, he treated them as *unequal*, both in power and dignity. He could not but confess that *to say* that Jesus is God, and all the while not to think of Him as the *Supreme* Being, but as inferior to another, is either an act of the grossest self-deception, or of hypocritical mockery! What is a God who is not the *Only* Object of worship and trust, but a God who is not in reality regarded as any God at all? This



*must* be the secret thought of the heart, however it may be disavowed and contradicted in words.

Job's mind was too vigorous, his perceptions too clear, and his judgment too keen to allow of his passing over palpable contradictions *without seeing them*: and his conscience told him, that it was more respectful to the Divine Author of the Bible to conclude, that the contradictions of doctrine which he detected amongst Christians belong to the human interpreters rather than to the Divine Wisdom Itself; and thus to the interpretation only, and not at all to the Book interpreted.

From these considerations,—from the unscriptural and irrational character of the doctrine of a *Tripersonality*—he was led to agree with the *Arian* portion of his Baptist friends. He therefore concluded, that the Only One and True God was the Father; that the Son possessed his divine qualities by gift from the Father, thus that they were two *unequal Divine* persons, (a contradiction in terms,) and that the Holy Ghost was an undefinable somewhat, but not a distinct Person. He could not, however, rest long in *this* state of mind. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the only proper foundation for the orthodox doctrine of a “vicarious sacrifice,” commonly, but *improperly* called the Atonement of the Apostles, is the doctrine of the three *co-equal* Divine Persons. As soon as the second Person is thought to lack *underived* Divinity, (such as that contended for by Dr. Adam Clarke,) his vicarious sacrifice loses its *infinite* worth, and he ceases to appear an *adequate* substitute to bear the punishment (said to be) due to *all* mankind. Besides, when the human understanding has once broken the fetters of mystery which previously held it in bondage, it is likely to continue to assert its natural liberty, and to go on in the exercise of its right to free inquiry.

Job now began to say within himself; How is this? It is asserted that God was *induced* (!) to forgive the sins of mankind in consequence of their putting his beloved Son to death; but what is this but to affirm, that God looked with *relentless anger* upon the long and black catalogue of human sins and crimes, until his rebellious and ungrateful creatures added to the list the greatest of all sins,

even that of putting to an ignominious death their greatest Benefactor, his innocent and well-beloved Son! and then, O strange to say! THIS all-surpassing act of wickedness, instead of increasing the anger of God, as might naturally have been expected, had exactly a contrary effect! for, on beholding this enormous addition to human guilt, God was so unaccountably affected by it, as to be induced to blot out the whole catalogue at once, and to forgive mankind all their transgressions, past, present, and to come, provided only that they should *believe themselves to have been forgiven?* Whatever multitudes may affirm, I cannot see *how* a great increase of guilt can give a new and peculiar claim to mercy and forgiveness! This appears to me to be quite impossible. It really amounts to this;—that God forgave mankind, not because they repented and returned to Him according to the Scripture, (Jer. xxxvi. 3,)—but because they increased in their wickedness, and became more wicked than ever! This cannot, I am sure, be the doctrine of the Scriptures! Why, it follows from this statement, that if the Jews had not been *so very wicked* as to put Jesus to death, mankind would not have been saved, but all would have been inevitably lost! Instead, therefore, of *blaming* the wickedness of those who shed the innocent blood of the Saviour, Christians should bless the murderous Jews as the cause of their salvation! Had they not preferred Barabbas the robber to Jesus, we should all have been lost! What can the heathen be expected to say to *this* version of the Gospel, namely, that mankind owe their salvation and restoration to the favour of God, to a most diabolical murder? Surely this was not the Gospel preached by the Apostles, and which caused the conversion of 3000 heathens in one day! No wonder so little progress is made by missionaries! And when we are told that the Supreme God was wrathful and revengeful against sinners, while his Son, the possessor by derivation *of the same nature*, was all mercy and forgiveness, what is this but to make the Son, who is esteemed the inferior of the two, more perfect and more deserving of *love*, than the Father, who is worshiped as the superior? It is to present to us a merciful nature *as being derived from* an unmerciful one, that is, from an angry nature? The Son, it is said, was

*never* angry, but the Father *was* ! How can the stream be sweeter and purer than the Fountain ? Is Divine anger (!) in the *superior* Person, a nobler attribute than Divine Mercy in the *inferior* ? If it be, then is *an angry man more virtuous*, because more in God's image, than *a merciful man* !

But let not the reader suppose that, in what has gone before, or in what follows, it is meant to question any of the statements of the apostles,—that “through the blood or death of Jesus Christ we have redemption and forgiveness of sins.” It is firmly believed, that man could not have been redeemed from the power of hell (*figuratively called “the wrath of God”*), except by the power of hell being overcome by means of the suffering and temptation of the cross. It is firmly believed that we never could have received forgiveness of sins, and which, when rightly understood, consists in man's being brought near to, and into communion with God, except by His Humanity being “*made perfect through suffering*,” and thus *reconciled* with the Divine Nature, and constituted the mediator, or medium, by which approach is granted to the Divine Nature within it, and by which the Holy Spirit is communicated to man ; for it is only by the Divine Operation called the Holy Spirit that man is brought from a state of (*figurative*) “wrath,” or impurity and misery, to a state of “grace,” or holiness and blessedness. It is firmly believed that the Saviour did that great work of righteousness which man had lost the capacity of doing, by overcoming for him in temptation, and thus removing hell from man ; and that this work was *so far* performed *in man's place*, that man had not strength, because of the abounding of iniquity, to do it himself, and therefore could not himself re-open his intercepted communication with heaven. Therefore it was that his *Saviour* did it for him (Isaiah lix. 16). But at the same time it is meant to deny most strenuously, that the sufferings of Jesus were *penal*, or that he was *punished* in man's place in order to appease divine wrath ! There is nothing in the Scriptures to countenance this idea, an idea as cruel as it is contradictory. The very terms “*Divine wrath*,” are parallel to virtuous vice, or white blackness ! If heaven, holiness, and salvation, are meant by *a state of grace*, which no one can doubt, then the opposite, namely,

hell, iniquity, and condemnation, or a state akin to hell, (being that state of enmity to goodness which is man's state by nature) *must be meant by a state of wrath.*

Our friend, continuing his meditation on the doctrine that the sufferings of Jesus Christ were penal, exclaimed, How am I to reconcile the act of punishing the innocent and all-righteous substitute, in the place of guilty man, with the first principles of justice? Were I to imitate God in this particular,—were I to punish my sister for the fault of my brother,—I should be an object of scorn! And yet the perfection of man must lie in the *closeness*, as well as the constancy of his imitation of God. Will any man, therefore, venture to affirm, that God is *unworthy* of imitation in *his administration of justice*, and that to imitate him in *this* particular, would be wicked? This he *must* say, however, if he holds the doctrine in question, and yet declares, *as he must do*, if he is not a reprobate, that it is wicked to punish the innocent person, *even with his own consent*, in the place of the guilty? I never can believe that any act can be good in God which is bad in man, and the likeness of which would be detestable in myself! I never can believe that an act is *truly* attributed to God, which, if attributed to a *good* man, would be *false* and *calumnious*! How can I believe that, by God's appointment, an innocent person was punished knowingly and deliberately in place of the guilty, so long as I find in the Scripture these words: "*He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord?*" (Prov. xvii. 15.) How can I believe that God abominates that very thing in us, which he requires us to believe that He did Himself? and that if we are so *wicked* as to refuse to believe that the Most Holy did Himself that which He Himself has declared to be "*abominable*," we shall be punished in hell for ever? A *man* who does an unjust act, after declaring that he abominates such an act, is justly called a hypocrite, and is regarded as the very worst of characters; but such is the elasticity of the faith called orthodox, that this same conduct may at the same time be *reverentially* attributed to God, (who, nevertheless, is *still* believed, or said, to be perfectly holy,) and *reproachfully* attributed to a man; who is therefore

judged to be a detestable character ! An orthodox believer at the same time blesses God *for acting contrary to his own declaration* ; and brands a fallible creature with being a hypocrite, because he does *nothing more* than—the *very same thing* !

And why could not God forgive mankind without punishing an innocent person in their place ? I turn to the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, and there I find that God can, and does forgive, without any such condition. But some persons tell me, that all to whom forgiveness was offered in the Old Testament *were required to believe*, as the condition of receiving that forgiveness, (notwithstanding the absence of all expression of that condition,) that the Messiah would be *some day* punished in their place, because of what is written in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah ; but how could Abraham and all who lived before Isaiah's time have believed what had not then been revealed ? Besides, if this had been the fact, the Lord's own disciples, surely, of all men, would not have been so ignorant of it as to imagine that the Messiah was to be a successful conqueror of the Romans, and the Restorer of the kingdom of Israel, instead of being "*despised and rejected of men*," as predicted in that chapter. I can find no trace in the Scripture of such belief that Messiah would come *to be punished*. I am told also, that the Mosaic sacrifices afford a proof that the worshiper, by means of them, expressed his belief in the future vicarious punishment of the Messiah ; but I can no where trace *in the Bible itself* any intimation that the sacrifices were either really typical of such *punishment*, or even *thought to be so* by any one of those who offered them. On the contrary, I find human Redemption expressly attributed to Divine Love :—" *God so loved the world* as to send his Son ;" but according to the Baptist and generally received doctrine, the passage *should* have been written, " *God was so angry* as to send his Son !" Are we to conclude that anger and love are the same thing ? or are we to conclude that, being angry, God wished to abate his anger out of love to those with whom He was angry, and so He devised a method whereby his vengeance might fall, and burn out upon another, whom He still more dearly loved, and with whom He was not

angry at all? What should we say of a parent who, out of love to an unworthy son with whom he was angry, should turn the torrent of his wrath upon his obedient brother, who had given him no cause for complaint? Should we not call him unjust, capricious, cruel, if not absolutely insane? Besides all this, how am I to conceive of the appalling statement, that in the bosom of the adorable Infinite (in whom *every* emotion which is *rightly* attributed to Him, must be both infinite and unchangeable) was the seat of two antagonist infinite passions at the same time,—Love to man, and wrath against him? Faint, indeed, would be the image afforded even by the most tremendous earthquake imaginable, of the collision of infinite opposites in the Divine Mind! Neither can I see *how*, if God be really unchangeable, the blood of Jesus could, as I am told, “*change his wrath to grace!*” And as to mankind being forgiven by the Father because the Son bore their punishment in their stead, if he really did bear all the punishment due to our sin, we were not forgiven at all, but *actually* punished to the most relentless extent, and degree,—*by proxy!* Our debt was paid in full, and therefore was not remitted at all, for obviously it could not be paid and remitted at the same time! Whatever gratitude, then, may be due to the supposed *Second* Person for paying our debt for us, beyond question none is due to the supposed *First* Person for his supposed forgiveness, inasmuch as he was *paid to the very uttermost!*

But what astonished Job most, when his eyes were thus opened, was, *the pretence* put forth in the Baptist Confession, as well as in other Evangelical creeds, that God departed from his own Divine Law, and, in direct opposition to it, and thus *in opposition to justice*, punished the innocent for the sins of the guilty, in order, as the Baptist Confession (Article 10) declares, “*to preserve his own justice inviolate*, to maintain the honor of his holy law, and the dignity and rectitude of his government”! Statements so flagrantly contradictory almost defy remark; while they suggest to the imagination the most painful anomalies. What would be said of a despot who should procure *the murder of a virtuous person*, and who, *adopting the language of the Baptist Confession*, should plead, that he took his

life in order "to preserve his justice inviolate, to maintain the honor of his law [*which some other persons had violated*], and thus to uphold the rectitude and dignity of his government?" And what would be said, if he should further declare, that he would pardon such of those offenders as should believe and confess, that an innocent person had suffered in their place? And what would be said, of the *hearts* or understandings of those who, taking advantage of such an infamous arrangement, should go forth proclaiming, that *this* was a merciful deliverance,—“a glorious salvation?”

A tract circulated by the before-mentioned “*Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*,” says, “The *doctrine of satisfaction* is the foundation of the Christian Religion: some say, what need of any satisfaction? Might not God forgive without it? It would shew greater mercy! But these persons consider not that God is JUSTICE ITSELF,—and justice, by its nature, must exact to the uttermost farthing; to remit is mercy; it is not justice.” I see, said Job, that the idea of justice here presented is the idea of *retaliation*, but is that man a just man pre-eminently who is most severe in his retaliation? Is this the Scripture idea of God’s justice, and of that human justice which is its true image? That is the question to be determined. I will refer to the Concordance. Having thus examined the Scriptures, Job found that the above meaning given to the word justice is never given to it in the Bible. On the contrary, justice and mercy are used in a *similar* if not the same sense, instead of being opposed to each other as the *Satisfaction* scheme untruly affirms. Indeed, upon every sound moral principle, justice is nothing but the action and state of a merciful disposition, which in acting justly acts uniformly according to those laws of conduct which have been framed for the common good; and the just application of these laws requires, that both in punishing, and forbearing to punish, a merciful regard should be had to the common good, which is identical with the upholding and advancement of the interests of truth and righteousness. Surely God could not possibly act otherwise than this; and in so acting, he must ever unite in the most perfect harmony, the tenderest mercy and the most undeviating

justice. Job selected the following specimens of the Scripture idea of justice; and he also took into consideration the fact of which he had been informed, that *the same* Hebrew word in the Old Testament is translated both *justice* and *righteousness*, plainly shewing that the translators could not but feel, that justice never means *retaliation*, or they would not have identified it thus with righteousness. That retaliation is not justice they could not but know, for they knew that a Christian *must* be a *just* man, at the same time that he must *not* retaliate.

"Do *justice* to the afflicted and needy."—Ps. lxxxii.

"The way of the *just* is righteousness."—Isaiah xxvi.

"I am a *just* God and a Saviour."—Isaiah xlv.

"Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is *just* and having salvation."—Zech. ix.

"Then Joseph her husband, being a *just* man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily." (He was just, observe, and *therefore* was merciful.)—Matt. i.

"God is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins."—1 John i. (See, also, Ps. lxii. 12; and Ezek. xxxiii. 19, 20.) It appears, therefore, that in the "Satisfaction scheme," the idea of *Divine* justice is not a parallel idea with that of *Christian* justice, but with that of *Heathen political* justice! So that the Divine virtues of the Most High do not resemble the highest virtues of man in his highest relations, but his lowest virtues in his lowest relations. And if this *be* the case, by how much the Christian is superior to the politician, by so much he is superior to God in respect to the virtue of justice!

Job saw that the more peculiar doctrine of Christianity is that of a Redeemer of mankind, together with the Redemption accomplished by Him in the world. He found that those who consider themselves to be so perfect in their views on this subject, as even to be able to rely upon them exclusively for their salvation, believe that Redemption consisted in man's being redeemed from the vengeance of his Heavenly Father (!) by the Son of God suffering on the cross the punishment due to man, and thus appeasing his Father's anger. But when our friend came to dwell upon



this idea of Redemption, it filled him with painful astonishment! Redemption from an enemy, personal or figurative, he could understand; but Redemption from the Father of mercies,—from man's best and only true Friend,—a Redemption which supposes the Creator to be the deadliest enemy man has, this he could not understand. It upset all his ideas, being repugnant to all his strongest and dearest convictions of the Divine Love and mercy, and to which alone his religious sympathies were attracted, and on which alone he felt able to repose, both for time and for eternity. No wonder that he was ready eventually to give up the *Trinitarian* Redemption—from the vengeance of God, in exchange for the *Unitarian* Redemption—from vice and ignorance, and the woes they engender. In the latter redemption there was at least nothing revolting to his natural and rational perceptions; but, in the former, there appeared to be involved a host of considerations which severely distressed, and finally disgusted him.

Job had not then obtained a view of the truly Scriptural and consolatory idea, that man was redeemed from the power and captivity of hell, or the hosts of wicked spirits called in the aggregate the Devil and Satan.—Not that it is to be supposed that God had given mankind over to the Devil to be punished by him, as is commonly imagined, but that man, by his wilful iniquity, had given himself over to be the slave of Satan, agreeably to the Apostolic words, "*his servants ye are to whom ye obey*;" for such is the law, that man must either be connected with heaven by righteousness, and be the child of his Father in heaven, or else the Lord's words will assuredly become applicable to him,—"*Ye are of your father, the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do*" (John viii. 44). Being in this state of spiritual captivity, man was unable to effect his own deliverance, and so his Creator, in his love and in his pity, became his Redeemer (Isaiah lxiii. 5, 9). When this view of Redemption was presented to Job, he readily embraced it, for he saw that this was emphatically a Redemption indeed; and that the consequent redemption from vice, and ignorance, and wo, was but the necessary result of it, as also was every other spiritual blessing offered and promised in the Gospel. Redemption

from Divine wrath, as already observed, is but a figure of speech, which Trinitarians mistakenly understand literally:—*The true and real Redemption consisted in a deliverance from the powers of hell, who otherwise would have destroyed the whole human race.*

Inconsistencies, when frequently presented to Job's notice, could not long escape the detection of his penetrating judgment. He was struck with the circumstance of Christians generally praying to the *Father*, (thinking of Him at the same time as the *Only Being* who can grant their petitions, and consequently as the ONLY GOD,) *for the sake of his Son*, of whom they do not at THAT time think as being God Himself, although they say that He really is God at other times. Job examined the state of his own mind during prayer; and he was obliged to conclude, that certainly he *thought* of "the Father" while praying to him, as the *Only* God, and the *Whole* God, and, indeed, the *only* Divine Person, for he never thought of any other Divine Person or Persons at all until he came to the end of his prayer, and then, on the mention of the *Son*, in conformity with habit and usage, he began to feel confused, and as if he had been guilty of some disrespect towards the Son, by not including him in his idea of God all along; he could not help feeling as if he had done him some injustice, or treated him with some indignity. But still he could not see how it was to be avoided, consistently with the practice of praying "for the sake of the Son." If, said he, those who pray in public would always begin with saying, "O God," then I could think of the whole three Persons,—but even then, when I come to the end, and think of Jesus as the *Son of* God, that is, the *Son of all the three Persons* whom I have been supplicating,—surely that will not do! For that would be to make the Son a *fourth* Person, or at least, it would be speaking of Him as if He were so, being the son of a tripersonal God! If they will say at the end of their prayers, "*for the sake of thy Son*," they ought always to begin their prayers, "*Our Father*," that only the *First* Person might be thought of; but then that too would not do, for the *third* Person would then be entirely lost sight of in prayer, and it would never do for Trinitarians to exclude, when addressing their triper-

sonal God, the third portion or constituent of His Godhead! It is true that those who take their doctrine from Bishop Pearson "On the creed," may think of the third as being included under the appellation, "Father," because the good Bishop considered that the second Person had *two* Fathers, the *first* Person being the Father of his Divine Nature, and the *third* of his Human Nature! But this notion is evidently a mis-conception of Luke i. 35. It is too absurd by a great deal to be a right interpretation of Scripture.

Job thought he would turn to the Church Liturgy, and there he found in the "Communion service" the following direction, "On every Sunday *excepting Trinity Sunday*, the people shall say, O Lord, *Holy Father*, Almighty and Everlasting God," but *on Trinity Sunday*, they shall omit the words "*Holy Father*," and say, "O Lord, Almighty and Everlasting God, who art one God, one Lord, not one Only person, but Three Persons in one substance." Job could make nothing of this but an instruction to the people to think of *the word* "God" every day in the year *excepting one*, as meaning the First Person only; but, *on that one day*, to think of it as meaning *all three* Persons! Well, thought Job, this is one way of getting over the difficulty! But can the Church of England suppose, that God will alter his nature on that particular day in order to accommodate Himself to their altered mode of thinking of Him? Really it is very strange, that, after the lapse of so many centuries, Christians should be altogether unsettled in their meaning of the most important phrases they use in their worship! They use the phrases "Son of *God*," and "Son of the *Father*," as synonymous; and yet they say that *God* is *three* Persons, and the *Father* is only *One* of the three! And yet very generally, no doubt, the word "God," in the phrase "Son of God," is understood as meaning the Father only: so that even the very word "God," amongst Christians, has the most indefinite and uncertain meaning of any word in their language!

Another consideration also sprung up in his mind. If, thought he, *it be true*, that *God's mercies are over all his works*, as David says, why cannot he grant prayer *for his own sake*? There can be no need to say to a good and

merciful man, "Do me such a favour *for the sake of your good son!*" Would he not reply, "Have you so bad an opinion of me as to think that I cannot do a disinterested action on my own account?" And then the words of Isaiah came into Job's mind, "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions *for mine own sake,*" and he found this said in three different places (Isaiah xliii. 25; xlviii. 9; Ezek. xxxvi. 22). This was said by Jehovah, the Father of Jesus Christ, he perceived, beyond dispute. What then, said he, can be the origin of this mode of praying? When our Lord taught us to pray, in what we call the Lord's Prayer, He said nothing about "*his sake*" at the end of the Prayer; and then there is the ancient form of praying, as exhibited in the prayer of Chrysostom in the Prayer Book,—that also says nothing of the kind. But, on the other hand, Job remembered that it is said in Ephesians, "even as God; *for Christ's sake,* hath forgiven you;" what, however was his astonishment, on finding that this is an undeniable mistranslation, and for which not even the slightest excuse can be alleged; a mistranslation, at the same time, shamelessly avowed, and obstinately left uncorrected by the ecclesiastical authorities. He found that no one with the least knowledge of Greek, could possibly think of translating the words rendered "*for Christ's sake*" in any other way than "*in Christ.*" He found that this mistranslation has not even a single advocate, either in the Established Church or out of it; and that it is nothing but a palpably dishonest gloss, introduced by the translators in support of an unwarrantable practice handed down by the Roman Catholics, and blindly adopted by Protestants. Still he found that some were disposed to defend that practice on the ground that Jesus Christ says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name,*;" but he could not see that these words were synonymous with "*for my sake.*" It appeared to him that "*in my name*" means rather, out of regard or reference to my nature; he saw that when Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together *in my name,* there am I in the midst of them," the words "*in my name*" refer to a state of mind in the worshiper, and not to any inducement presented by

him to the mind of the Great Unchangeable Object of worship!

Job also perceived that Christians of the present day are fond of giving vent to their humility, and perhaps, in some cases, of making a show of it, by finishing their prayers to the First Person with the words, "this we ask for the sake of, or through *the merits* of, thy Son Jesus Christ," meaning hereby to disavow all claim to merit themselves. So far as the disavowal of self-merit goes, thought Job, this is very good; but that he might know what is meant by the "*merits of Christ*," he searched the Scriptures,—but *not a single word on the subject could he find there!* He found that the "*merits of Christ*" are never there mentioned! and so he felt himself at liberty to affix his own meaning to the words, as words of human origin, since the Scripture afforded him no assistance. And thus he reasoned. The merit of an act lies in the *motive* of it; the motive of Jesus in suffering and obeying the law for our sakes was,—*his merciful desire for our salvation*; consequently the phrase "through the merits," if it have any meaning, must mean through the *mercy* of Christ; if, then, the Father be asked to grant prayer through, or for the sake of, *the mercy of another*, called the Son, this must imply that the Father has no mercy of his own! On this conclusion, Job determined to say nothing more in his prayers about "the merits of Christ," as a separate person, because he could not understand that phrase in any other sense than such a sense as he deemed highly affronting to the Father of mercies, even to that God "*whose mercy is over all his works*," and whose mercy is the unceasing theme of Divine Revelation! This conclusion led him to turn over the Church Prayer Book, to see how the prayers were generally terminated, and there he found a variety of phrases which only led him to this further conclusion, that those who used them could not possibly affix any meaning to them themselves! I wonder, said he, what they can mean by "for the love of thy only Son;" "for the honor of our mediator and advocate;" "through the might of Jesus Christ?" Such language is either unmeaning, or implies a contradiction, and

consequently is void of edification, and cannot be consistent with truth, and therefore I have done with it.

When Job subsequently learned from the New Christian Church that Jesus and Jehovah are one and the same Divine Person, Jesus being no other than Jehovah manifested in a Divine-human form, he wondered that he had never been struck with the very remarkable circumstance, that, in one place, Jesus says, "*Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I WILL DO IT; if ye shall ask any thing in my name, I WILL DO IT*" (John xiv: 14, 15); while in another place he says, "*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, HE WILL GIVE IT YOU*" (John xvi. 23). Here, said he, are distinctly presented to us *two Granters of prayer*: which seeming impossibility can only be cleared up by remembering the other words of Jesus, "*I and my Father are ONE*" (John x. 30); that is, beyond dispute, "*One Granter of Prayer.*" But who, now-a-days, in offering up prayer, ever thinks that Jesus Christ spoke words at all worthy of considerate remembrance, when he said, and that with emphasis, twice,—"*that will I do?*" Trinitarians and Arians *take no notice* of His gracious promise, *in practice*: while Unitarians boldly deny the *truth* of the declarations of Him whom they call "Master," affirming that he has no power at all to grant prayer, since, having none of the attributes of Deity, He could not even know when prayer was offered to Him, because this could only be known to an Omniscient and Omnipresent Being, and Jesus, as they affirm, is nothing but a mere man! But since Trinitarians *call* Jesus "God," and yet shew, by their praying to another Person exclusively, that they *do not* in heart *believe his words, just quoted*, they are like Judas, they betray the Son of Man with a kiss! Unitarians are *more honest*, but they are also *more audacious*! And why, thought Job afterwards, do not Evangelicals go *directly* to Jesus Himself, and ask Him to forgive their sins, when they know, or should know, that he said expressly, as recorded by *three Evangelists*, "*The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins?*" (Matt. ix. 6; Mark ii. 10; Luke v. 24.) The case is clear,—*they do not believe Him*; and yet they expect salvation *by faith only*, notwithstanding this important

deficiency in their belief! It is in vain for them to reply that *they do* believe Him. "By their *fruits*," let the question be decided! Who ever heard these words in a place of worship, "*O Lord Jesus Christ, forgive our sins for thy own mercy sake, for thou hast power on earth to forgive sins?*" Let such words be shown in the Church prayers, and if they cannot be found there, then let those who use those prayers confess, that, *on this point*, they are *infidels*! Possibly those who call Jesus a *Divine* Person, or a God, think that He has been somehow or other *deprived of this power to forgive sins* by his partners in Deity, or that he has given it up, or divested himself of it. Strange as this supposition undoubtedly is, it is the *only one* by which the total neglect of the Saviour's most positive declarations can be justified. But truly the Trinitarian churches are without excuse, for they are expressly informed that Jesus, even *the Man* so named, would perpetually exercise his power to forgive sins, for thus the Apostle Peter addresses them; "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged upon a tree: Him hath God raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour, *for to give repentance* unto Israel, *and forgiveness of sins*" (Acts v. 30, 31). It is in vain to say of this or that preacher that *once* in his life he asked Jesus to forgive sins, or that a certain individual once heard another offer up such a petition. If the words uttered by Jesus *are true*, the practice ought to be constant and universal. And truly if Jesus and the Father ARE ONE, there is then only *one* Forgiver of sins. Mark the words of Paul, "*Even as CHRIST forgave you*" (Col. iii. 13); again, "*Even as God IN CHRIST hath forgiven you.*" And how frequently Jesus spoke of *the Father DWELLING IN HIM!* and when it is considered that He also said, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*" (John xiv. 8, 9); "*He that seeth me seeth Him that sent me*" (John xii. 45); and "*I and my Father are ONE;*" it is plain, that the Father and Son are *One Forgiver of sins*: and that "God in Christ" is no other than Jehovah manifested in, and as, Jesus Christ. This may be illustrated by the consideration, that a man would mean the same thing, whether he should say, "*my soul in my body forgives;*" or "*I, John so-and-so, forgive.*"—Such were

the thoughts of Job Abbott after he had entered the New Christian Church.

He was then enabled to see the relation of the Father and Son in quite a new light, and thus he reasoned. If *to see* Jesus is *to see* the Father, *to pray* to Him must be *to pray* to the Father; and *to honor* Him must be *to honor* the Father; and this, indeed, Jesus expressly declared, when he said, "*All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father: he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father*" (John v. 23). Unto whom should I pray but to Jesus?—to Him who has "*all power in heaven and on earth*?" Can there be two Divine Persons or Divinities possessing *all* power? There can be but One, and that One is Jesus, who therefore is Jehovah personally manifested (John i. 18). How frequently does Isaiah declare, that JEHOVAH is *our* REDEEMER, and that *beside Him there is no SAVIOUR*! And of Jesus it is said in Matthew, "*Thou shalt call HIS name JESUS, for he SHALL SAVE his people from their sins.*" Jesus, then, is Jehovah, at once our Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour!

Immediately after declaring that "*in Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,*" the Apostle proceeds to describe Him as "*the HEAD of all principality and power;*" and in another place, he says, that the Father raised Him [meaning that the Divine Nature raised the Human\*] "*far above all principality and power, and might*

\* It is plain, that the "all things" given to the Son, could not be given to a coequal *Divine* Second Person, even *supposing* the existence of such a Person, for *this*, being already *full*, could neither want, nor receive *more*; it was confessedly the *human* nature *only* which was a receiver; but why is it *never* said, that this Human Nature received any thing from *its own* supposed Divine Person, or from *any other* Divine Nature besides that of the Father? *The answer is plain.* There is not any *Essential Divine* Nature in existence except that of the Father. Had there been a Divine *Second* Person dwelling in the Human Nature, IT could have supplied that nature with "all things," without the necessity, or possibility of their being supplied by *another* Divine Person, called the Father.

The reader will also observe, that the "all things" received by the Son from the Father, must have been received by *such* a Humanity as was *not individually separate* from the Father, any more than the body



and dominion, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be HEAD *over all, to the church*, which is his

of a man is a distinct individual from his soul; because it is not possible that "all things" belonging to the Father could be given to, or received by, any Person *individually separate* from Him, whether a *Divine* Person, as the Trinitarians say; or a *finite* Person, as the Unitarians affirm, and which thus appears:—

"All things" could not be received by a *Divine* and *Infinite* Person, because, being already Divine, and therefore possessing Infinite fulness, *such* a Person would be incapable of receiving *any addition*, for how can any thing be added to Infinite fulness? It is equally clear that

"All things" could not be received by any separate *human* Person, or *finite* individual, because *such* a person *could not contain them*; for this would be like supposing the ocean to be poured into, and contained in, a small vessel! Indeed there is even less ratio than this between the "all things" of the Infinite, and any supposable finite recipient of them!

Besides; the *first* Divine Person having given his "all things" to the *second*, He would have *nothing left* by virtue of which He could *still* be God!—unless it be supposed, that, notwithstanding his having given "all things" to *another*, He could still possess them as before! and *then* there would be two Possessors of "all things," and consequently two Gods!

And if "all things" were given by the Creator to a *creature* (as the Unitarians make Jesus Christ to be) by that very act the Creator *undeified* Himself! and made one of his creatures to be God in the place of Himself! for He parted with "all things" by virtue of which He was God! But if the Possessor of "all things" gave "all things" to a creature, and still continued to possess "all things" as before, then He must have produced an *additional* aggregate of "all things" for the occasion, consisting of a new universe, and a *duplicate* set of all his own divine attributes, and this He must have done in the act of communicating "all things" to this supposed creature; and then, a new God having been thus produced (!) and brought into existence! there would now be two Gods!

Thus it is demonstrated, that the Trinitarian and Unitarian hypotheses are, and must be, equally *impossible to be true*; and that some new explanation is required which is not liable to a similar objection, and without which, the true sense of Scripture is unknown! Happily the *New Church* is able to offer, with inexpressible thankfulness, this grand desideratum to the Christian world!

Let the reader consult Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; John iii. 34, 35; xiii.

Body" (Eph. i.). How evident it is that a person thus exalted, in whatever light that Person may be viewed, *must* have the power to forgive sins! How can it be imagined that the Head of the church, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has not such a power! but has to intercede with a Mightier One than the "Head over all things," to grant forgiveness? Surely the attribute of mercy and forgiveness is inseparable from the office of King and Head of the church, and the supposition that this great King has to intercede with One greater than He, reduces the former to the subordinate condition of merely a secretary of state to the latter, for even a viceroy has the power of pardoning offences! And to this condition is Jesus Christ reduced both by Trinitarians and Unitarians! Both *call* him the Head of the church, but,—*What do they mean?*

Job Abbot was accustomed to hear Evangelical preachers dwell much on what they deemed the superior moral influence of the Gospel, and by the Gospel they meant the preaching of the doctrine of a punished innocent substitute, commonly, but improperly, called the Apostolic doctrine of Atonement. In further proof of the truth of that doctrine, they would also triumphantly refer to the number of per-

3; xvi. 15; and xvii. 2; and let him endeavor to form, as becomes him, a *clear* and dispassionate judgment on these remarkable passages: let him, also, well consider, whether "all things" could have been given to *any other* Humanity than that which is called the "*Only* begotten Son of God," because it SO came forth from Deity as to be still inseparably and *individually one* with Its Father or Divine Origin; and, consequently, of such a nature as to have *no other essence than the Divine Essence Itself*; unlike every being *individually separate* from Jehovah, the *essence* of which is, and must be *merely finite*. Let the reader, then, rejoice to discern, that it was because the Son or Humanity *had no other Essence but such as was Divine*, that It could receive the Spirit "without measure," and thus the "all things" of the Father; comparatively as the finite body of a man receives "all things" from its finite soul or essence, and yet the soul (in consequence of the *individual oneness* of soul and body), although it continually communicates its "all things," still possesses them in the body, equally as if it did not communicate them at all. This, every one may know from his own experience, and thus may find *in himself* a clear illustration of the Lord's words, "*I and my Father are ONE*" (John x. 30).

sons converted through the preaching of it, contending that such conversions must be the work of God, who thereby owned the doctrine, and testified that his blessing was upon the preaching of it. Our friend was unable for some time to see this matter in a clear light. He could not but confess that some of the conversions thus wrought, were accompanied with a great moral change, that is, so far as the outward conduct was concerned ; but he could not see *how* a doctrine really erroneous could produce an effect, even to that extent, so obviously beneficial. Nevertheless he still saw that the doctrine by which so much good seemed to be effected, was one by which the Divine Attributes were dishonored. He determined, therefore, to grapple with this seeming anomaly, and at length he discovered what seemed to him a satisfactory solution of the question. It was thus that he reasoned. If the mind of man were in a healthy condition, the doctrine that God is willing to shew mercy and to forgive, on the sole condition of contrition and amendment, (and which together form true and actual repentance,) would not only be highly acceptable to the mental perceptions, but would also be attended with the most powerful moral efficacy. It would present God in such an attractive light as intensely to awaken thankfulness to Him for his goodness, accompanied with a sincere desire to imitate his mercy and beneficence. The Divine character would be seen in so endearing a point of view, it would appear so generous and disinterested, that all the corresponding affections of the mind would go forth in an ardent and grateful response, and rejoice to meet it with humble acknowledgment, and dutiful and filial obedience. But, on the contrary, the sad evidence of the natural unhealthy tone of the mind, is powerfully confirmed by the fact, that this pure and all-engaging doctrine is not congenial to its taste, and therefore but little affects it ; while the really opposite doctrine of *forgiveness through the penal sacrifice of an innocent substitute* is far more agreeable and stimulating to its perverted perceptions. It appears to be congenial and pleasing to the naturally selfish and vindictive character of fallen man, that God should be so represented as to appear to him to be like himself,—selfish and vindictive. And inasmuch as a selfish man can only be

moved by acting upon his selfish hopes and fears ; and since he would tremble at a vindictive tyrant, while he spurned the counsels of a tender father, so the idea of God seems to *take effect* upon a selfish mind only so far as that idea resembles the former character,—that of a tyrant ; and to be nugatory, so far as it is like the latter,—that of a father. If, said our friend, I have to correct a selfish child who has been spoiled by excessive indulgence, it is in vain that I appeal to the generous affections of humanity ; they are all dead and buried ! In order to produce any effect upon it I must appeal to its selfish hopes and fears. And thus it is that selfish men, who would remain unmoved by a genuine statement of God's merciful and beneficent views and feelings, are sometimes intensely excited by the animated description of preachers who set forth that God has revealed the fact, that he so intensely hates sin because it is opposed to his holiness, his will, his laws, and his purposes, that he was determined to punish it either in the person of the sinner, or his substitute : and that he will certainly punish sin in the person of the sinner, unless he believes that it has been already punished by anticipation in the person of his own Son. The strong representations of God's severity towards his harmless and spotless Son, strike the selfish mind with terror, and suggest that a terrible fate must await the offender from such a God, if he does not believe that he has been punished by proxy, and *perhaps* he may add, if he does not also forsake his sins. He is confidently informed that God laid aside all his love to his only Son, and made him bear all the accumulated and concentrated punishment due to guilty man, by bathing his sword of burning fury and vengeance in his innocent blood ! This statement haunts his imagination. The idea of God which is constantly presented to his mind is that of a dreadful avenger, an omnipotent tormentor ; and this idea overpowers his will, and thus he is moved to cease from sin, *as the least of two evils* ! It is not represented to him that God hates sin because it is, in the nature of things, incompatible with the happiness of the sinner, but because it is an insult against his Person, government, and laws, and offensive to his honor and dignity. The former sentiment would well become the character of a truly beneficent ruler, while the

latter is not incompatible with that of a cruel and inexorable tyrant. It is not the justice of a benevolent mind, but the vindictiveness of a cruel one, falsely called justice, which corresponds to the justice commonly attributed to God, namely, that which required and demanded satisfaction by shedding his Son's blood! Such are the statements by which the selfish fear of a terrible God is aroused, and it is aroused to be artfully allayed, at the proper moment, by inspiring the selfish hope that this furious Being will consider the trembler's sins to have been punished in the person of his Son! Selfish hope and fear being thus powerfully called into exercise, and the hope having got the better of the fear, quiet succeeds consternation, and under the influence of self-congratulation at the agreeable change, selfish love and gratitude to the author of it are called forth,—just as the indolent and selfish feel love and gratitude to the tyrant who prefers them to the industrious and benevolent, and unjustly robs the latter of the earnings of their toil to give to them; or just as the coward soldier who would, very sincerely no doubt, thank his commanding officer for having posted him in a place of safety, and caused his brave and generous comrade to occupy that post of certain death which properly belonged to him! But who would applaud the love and gratitude thus exhibited by the mercenary slave, or the base coward, even if those emotions *should* lead to personal devotedness to the object of them, and obedience to his will? Such, then, are the low-born moral influences which I more than suspect lead to a large portion of the “conversions” which take place around me! And, in this case, whatever man may gain of outward moral good, in a corresponding ratio God must lose, in regard to the just estimation of his nature and character, by being loved and worshiped for that which He *is not*, and *does not*, even for that which He *cannot be*, and *cannot do* (because it consists not with any just idea of goodness), instead of being revered and adored, loved and served, for that which He really is, really has done, is doing, and will do. I readily admit that the outward moral results of the preaching of this cruel doctrine are good so far as they go; but I cannot but deplore the means by which they are brought about. I have to choose, at the

best, between two evils; on the one hand, a spurious morality, founded on spurious notions and motives,—an outward good that is dead for want of the animating soul of inward good; and, on the other, open immorality combined with dense ignorance. As a lover of my species, I must necessarily choose the former. But from all these considerations I cannot but fear, that the greater portion of what is believed concerning a punished innocent substitute and that which, by the fear and terror it creates, is most influential on the conduct, exercises, at best, *such* a moral influence as heaven disowns, because while it leads to an apparent honoring of God in the outward conduct, it dishonors him inwardly in the mind, by the derogatory thoughts which it induces respecting Him. And hence it has come to pass, that the morality of the religious world is so generally wanting in a noble, generous, elevated, and expansive spirit and motive: and is of so timid, selfish, narrow, cold, partial, partizan, and bigoted a character. I must however admit that the belief of a punished innocent substitute is fifteen centuries old at least; but then I am led to the conclusion, that it never was so prominently set forth as the motive to action on the one hand, or as a sufficient substitute for moral conduct on the other, as it is at the present day. \*Whether consistent with orthodox creeds or not, there has hitherto existed, in a greater or less degree, an earnest belief and conviction, that a good life, as being most acceptable to God, and most conducive to salvation, *is the principal thing to be attended to by a sincere Christian*; and further, that a truly good life is that which springs from a love to do good, and a desire to promote the happiness of *all* our fellow creatures.

When Job became a receiver of the New Christian doctrine, he was led to admire that Divine benignity which brings all possible good out of evil; and he was led to see clearly, and thence to confess, that,

“For human weal, heaven husbands all events.”

He saw that while the believer in the vicarious sacrifice contemplates, on the one hand, one part of the supposed tripersonality called the Father, as burning with feelings of wrath and vengeance; and, on the other hand, another

part called the Son, as overflowing with tenderness, kindness, and pity, the Divine Operation (called the Holy Spirit) draws off the thought of *the well-disposed* from dwelling on the wrathful Father, and fixes it on the loving Son; thus awakening gratitude and personal love to the latter for his amazing condescension, in suffering so much for poor, guilty man! Perhaps, also, at the same time, something like an awful sense of gratitude is felt to the Father for consenting to accept his Son's sufferings, and for not consuming the whole human race in the fierceness of his anger. Thus Job saw, that even by means of erroneous doctrines, the Lord mercifully condescends to provide, that so much of a genuine principle of gratitude and love, founded on the admiration of infinite mercy and goodness, shall be insinuated into the conduct of the converted person, as his state admits of, to the end that such genuine principle may form a nucleus for greater purity of motive, and greater spiritual power, and moral efficacy, to be afterwards attained. Our friend had often remarked to himself, that if the Father and Son had been *openly* confessed to be two distinct gods, and not only so, but *gods of a very different and opposite quality and character*, no greater difference between them could have been conveyed to his mind, than was conveyed by his observation of the manner in which they are respectively regarded, and spoken of by Evangelicals. He had noticed with what rapture well-disposed religious people will dwell upon the interference of the Saviour in their behalf, expressing themselves, and repeating his name, with a sort of affectionate *familiarity* (not very consistent with their professed belief in his God-head), often asking the question for instance, "Do you love Jesus Christ?"—"I love all that love Jesus Christ!" while at the same time, they appear to approach the Father with dread and suspicion, as if they inwardly thought of, and addressed him, saying, "I know you would punish me if it were not for your Son; no doubt Wesley says of you very truly,

‘ My son is in my servant’s prayer,  
And Jesus forces me to spare.’

No thanks to you for your forbearance except on his account;

ne is the sinner's friend, but you are (though I must not dare to say so) the sinner's enemy, and, since all are sinners, you are the dreadful enemy of all mankind! It is your Son Jesus who is their kind and sympathizing friend, and their constant intercessor with you on their behalf! It is he who continually appeases your ceaseless anger, and causes you to lay aside your boiling wrath." Being thus led to think much on the Son's character, the well-disposed are led to imitate it; and thinking little on the really contrary character attributed by their creed to the Father, they are withdrawn from the pernicious imitation of the severity attributed to Him, and from making an example to themselves of that strange way of satisfying what is called *divine* justice, by infringing every principle of *human* justice, in punishing the innocent *knowingly* in the place of the guilty! But as regards the merely selfish convert, our friend saw that he would naturally dwell much on the congenial character attributed to the Father, and little on the (to him) uncongenial character attributed to the Son; and that, therefore, the Divine Operation must deal differently with him, by turning his false doctrine to the best account for him which his state admits of, namely, by leading him to act *outwardly* as a moral man, from the *selfish* motives of fear and hope inspired by the terrible ideas he entertains concerning God—the Father (!) and thus drawing him off from the grosser selfish feelings and considerations which belong to an absolutely immoral condition. But still such outward piety and morality is cold, dead, and undignified, through the want of the genial influences of the enlightened motives of justice and charity, and the absence of genuine moral and religious truth.

Job was much puzzled by the usual statement of the doctrine of the Intercession of Jesus Christ with the Father. His first inquiry, when his attention was drawn to it, was, "What merciful and necessary purpose, worthy of Divine Love, is intended to be promoted by it?" I find that, as the facts are described, the *second* person is continually pointing out to the *first*,—to that unchangeable God whose Son He is, *his wounds*, as if to *excite* him to have mercy on mankind! But can God be excited by *sensible objects*?



Can immutable mercy *need* excitement? If the Father agreed to give, as the purchase of his Son's wounds, all who believe in Him, what need of intercession? Can The Infinite forget? or need to be reminded by sensible evidences? Either the Son must improperly intercede for those *not* included in the contract; or the Father must wish to exclude some of those whose salvation is said to have been fairly purchased, or, What need of this intercession? If pardon was purchased for all who believe, does not the Omniscient Father know who they are who believe; and who are thus entitled to forgiveness, without the Son's telling Him? If he does, why should He be told of that which he already knows?

But another consideration presents itself;—if the Son purchased forgiveness from the Father on the cross, (waiving the circumstance of his still having to intercede for the fulfilment of his purchase,) how was it that he said previously, when He was in the world, as recorded by three Evangelists, that “*the Son of Man hath HIMSELF power on earth to forgive sins,*” in proof of which he wrought a miracle (Matt. ix. 6; Mark ii. 10; Luke v. 24). An Apostle certainly believed this, for he used these words, “*Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye*” (Col. iii. 13). It seems very unaccountable that, before he suffered, he should possess a power to forgive sins Himself; and then that he should die to procure forgiveness for man from another Divine Person; and then that that Other should keep it to Himself, and only yield it up bit by bit, at the earnest entreaty of the purchaser, who even finds it necessary to shew continually the proofs, in his body, of his having really completed the purchase, by way of refreshing the recollection of the Divine Seller! Now what a surprising summary is this! *In this world* the Lord Jesus had power to forgive sins; *on the cross* he purchased what he before possessed; *after his resurrection* He declared that “*all power was given unto Him in heaven and on earth,*” and which “*all power*” must, of necessity, include the power to forgive sins; and NOW, after all this, Christians universally shew, by the tenor of their prayers and preaching, that *they do not believe that, in reality, THE LORD JESUS possesses, or ever did possess, any such power as He*

*Himself said He possessed, or any such power as they themselves say He purchased with his blood ; or any such power as the apostle Paul attributes to Him : and so they apply to ANOTHER Divine Personage EXCLUSIVELY, and who, as they think, ALONE possesses the power to forgive sins, but who will not exercise that power, as the doctrine of intercession implies, except at the instigation of Him who once had it, but who no longer possesses it ! The unavoidable inference from such conduct is, that while they say they expect salvation only from their faith, they have in reality so little faith, that they believe neither of the all-important, emphatic, and express declarations of their Saviour, either that He hath power on earth to forgive sins ; or, that He hath all power in heaven and on earth ! It is plain that Trinitarians do not believe these declarations one iota more than Unitarians ; but they take up a less manly position than the Unitarians, for these openly impeach and qualify the obvious sense of the declarations of their Saviour ; while Trinitarians, like Judas, betray their Lord with a kiss, by outwardly assenting to the obvious sense of His words, and inwardly believing the very reverse of His testimony !*

But not only, said Job, is the orthodox doctrine of Intercession plainly contradictory to the words of the Saviour ; it also suggests such ideas *only* as are most gross and sensual ; and if all other proofs were wanting, this alone would prove, that *such* a doctrine or explanation of the Intercession of Jesus Christ *cannot* be the result of a right interpretation of Scripture. I perceive, said Job, that it produces on my imagination a sensible image, like that of two judges sitting side by side at the Old Bailey, one of them older, and the other younger, arguing the case of a criminal whose fate is under consideration. *Can I help such an imagination being formed ?* Is it my fault that such a heathenish idea of two gods is presented to me ? Is it not the natural and necessary result of the statements which I hear ? and can statements be really true which produce *such* an impression ? Surely the statements in the Scriptures on this subject must be *figurative*, and so I shall conclude them to be, whether I come to a clear understanding of their meaning or not. I will no longer give ear to those

teachers who treat these figurative statements as if they were literal facts ; for such they cannot be consistently with any intelligible ideas of the *Unity* of God.

Subsequently, Job saw clearly, that the intercession attributed to the Son only implies that the Humanity of Jehovah, named Jesus Christ, is the mediator, or, as the word intercession also literally implies, *goes between* the invisible Deity and fallen man, and, as it were, continually applies itself to the Divine Nature which dwells in it, to receive, and adapt to man's condition, the intense glories of Deity. With this view, Job saw that the doctrine of the Divine Unity was perfectly compatible, so that he could consistently understand the Lord's declaration, "*I and my Father are One,*" as meaning, that the Father was, and is, manifested in Person in his Son, born and glorified in the world, and that thus the Father and the Son together are One God, One Person, One Granter of Prayer, *One Forgiver of Sins*, One Governor of the Universe, One Creator, One Redeemer, and One Sanctifier. He saw that the Humanity, from the Divinity within it,—and the Divinity, by the Humanity which manifests it,—governs, forgives, and sanctifies ; and that this is what is meant by the declaration of the Apostle ; "*To us there is One God, THE FATHER, OF WHOM are all things ; and One Lord, JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM are all things*" (1 Cor. viii. 6). Job saw that all the works implied in these several relations are carried on by the Holy Spirit, as the Divine Proceeding, or Emanation, from the Divinity and Humanity, which are united in one, like the soul and body in man, and from which One proceeds all active operation ; he saw that the appellation *father* denotes the Eternal Deity ; and that the appellation *Son* denotes *the Humanity*, which, in consequence of its perfect glorification in the world, became altogether a *Divine* procession, or derivation from the Father ; and is the provided medium (or mediator speaking in the way of personification) by which the Eternal Father manifests Himself to the human mind, as seen by the eye of faith ; he saw, also, that the Humanity operates on the human mind from the Father as its Divine soul, and that such operation is *immediately* effected by the Holy Spirit, which is a divine procession from the Divine Hu-

manity, and which may be compared to the emanating heat and light by which the sun of nature operates upon the earth. (See John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7, 13, 14, 15). Thus was Job enabled, eventually, to understand clearly the meaning of the Apostolic declaration, that, "*the Head of every man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God;*" also what is meant by Christ being *made unto us of God, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption*; he saw that thus is described the office of mediation, or the function of a medium, which the Human Nature performs to the Hidden Divine Esse within it. Job could not only see how the "*Word made flesh*" constituted this medium to "*the Essential Life,*" or Divinity within it since the incarnation, but how the Word, or Divine Wisdom, *previously* to its Incarnation, was the medium by which the Divine Esse of Life and Love effected its purposes, just as the understanding of man effects the purposes of his will or love. Hence he saw the meaning of the declarations, that the Father *made the world* by the Son, by which he did not understand that One Divine Person, able, but not willing, to do the work Himself immediately, *set another* to do it, who was his *Equal* in dignity and power; but he understood that the Divine Love effected its purposes by the Divine Wisdom. (See John i.; Col. i.)

After considering well all his difficulties as before described, and others which are yet to be mentioned, Job Abbott felt that he could no longer remain a General Baptist, whether a Trinitarian or Arian Baptist, and so he became a Unitarian!

— "And a very natural result indeed!" will probably be the inward ejaculation of some "orthodox" reader. "What else could be expected of a poor ignorant creature who presumed to pry into mysteries which are unfathomable? A poor stocking-maker, indeed, to pretend to understand the incomprehensible God! Shocking!"—But hold, my friend! Be not too hasty in your condemnation. The Scriptures are a revelation which God has given of Himself, and they are addressed to the reason and understanding of those to whom he has thus made Himself known. Now if nothing can be understood of the Great

Being so revealed, but that His Nature cannot be understood, a man is no wiser after reading the Bible than he was before! There is no great wisdom or privilege in repeating the *mere names* of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whether in company with the General Baptists, or any other Trinitarians. As to the former sect, they themselves say, as above quoted, that the three existences meant by those names *may be* Persons, or they *may be not*; they are united somehow, but nobody knows how; they are distinct, but nobody knows the mode of their distinction; it is a mystery which they can give no "*exact*" account of! There is nothing very enlightening in this confession of faith,—or, rather say,—*confession of ignorance*! And as for the edification resulting from it; to edify means to build up the mind, and all building must be formed *after a plan*, and a plan implies knowledge; to confess, then, that a doctrine is incomprehensible, is the same as to admit that it cannot conduce to edification. How can the mind be built up of things which are altogether invisible and intangible to itself? And yet "all Scripture is given" to this end, and to no other,—“that the man of God may be perfected, being thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. iii. 16). So far, then, as Revelation is not understood, its purpose is manifestly defeated.

When Job told his friends that he could not think that the Scriptures taught so incomprehensible, and therefore so unprofitable a doctrine as that there are *Three Divine Persons* or *Individuals* employed in governing the universe, and, nevertheless, that we must believe that there is *Only One God*, some replied, “the subject is above human reason, and therefore cannot be understood, but nevertheless it must be believed, because it is contained in the Bible. Would you refuse to acknowledge that grass grows, because you cannot understand *how* it grows?” To the justice of this reasoning our friend raised the following objection. I think your ideas are somewhat confused. The *fact* that the grass grows cannot be controverted. The *fact* that there exist three Divine Persons is the thing in dispute. I know that, supposing the Scriptures plainly to state this to be a fact, so long as I profess to believe in the Scriptures, I am bound to acknowledge it

to be a fact ; but I believe that the Scriptures not only do not reveal this as a fact, but do not even infer that it is so, by any fair implication. I am clearly of opinion that the passages interpreted as implying this fact are not rightly interpreted. I am not presumptuously demanding to be informed *how* any *fact* clearly revealed concerning Deity is true (and which would be the proper parallel to the supposed desire to know how the grass grows) : I am not demanding to know *how* God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent : Scripture presents this to me as a fact, and my reason is compelled to assent to the truth of the Scripture statement, because I perceive that the acknowledgment of a God, whose existence I am compelled even by the dictates of natural reason to admit, necessarily implies the acknowledgment of those attributes which make him to be God. Knowing the fact that God possesses these attributes, I know all that is important to be known, and I have no curiosity to inquire *how* the fact is, especially as I perceive that the subject is too exalted for any finite faculty fully to comprehend. And could I know as certainly that there are three Divine Persons, as I know that grass grows, I should be as little curious to find out *how* these three are united in one, so as to make up One God. But while I see no contradiction involved in the acknowledgment of the Divine Attributes, I perceive a direct contradiction in believing that there is a Divine Being or Individual who is called God, and that in this Individual three Divine Individuals are contained. I have seriously and diligently examined whether the Scriptures do really reveal this as a fact, and I was led to make this investigation from a doubt whether it is likely that the Scriptures should require the belief of such a contradiction ; and I have finished my inquiry with concluding that, although the existence is plainly revealed of a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it is not plainly revealed that these names mean or imply *three Divine Persons*. Thus I find myself relieved from the burden, for a burden I found it, of believing contradictions to be true. The question at issue between us is clearly one of Scripture interpretation, and thence a question about a fact. But you assume the existence of a fact, and the infallibility of your interpreta-

tion, and you then proceed to prefer the altogether groundless imputation, that I am seeking to understand a subject above my capacity, and that I deny an incontrovertible truth, because it transcends my reason. A little reflection will teach you, either that you misunderstand me, or else that your treatment of me is not ingenuous. Nothing can be *really* believed which is *above* reason; for, if you will observe, it is the *fact* that God is, and that He is infinite in all his attributes, which is the object of faith; and since reason clearly *perceives that this must be a fact*, the fact believed cannot truly be said, as a fact, to be above reason. *How* this is a fact, is, I admit, above reason, but this "how" is no part of what I am to believe. Your mode of stating the case pre-supposes that the Scripture has described to us *how* three Divine Persons are one God; also that this description is certainly true, but absolutely unintelligible to us, and that I have refused to believe it to be true, because I cannot understand it. Now the real state of the case is this;—you believe, according to your interpretation of Scripture, that there is One God who consists of three Divine Persons; and I believe, according to my interpretation, that there is One God, and that He is but One Divine Person. The question is purely one of Scripture Interpretation, and relates to a *fact* within the province of reason to inquire into.

*As a Unitarian*, our friend believed the Father to be the One Divine Person who alone is God, and that the "Son and Holy Ghost" do not imply any existences which can properly be included in the Divine Nature. But when he became a Christian of the New Church, he saw that the three names, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, describe the three essentials of the One God, who is our Lord Jesus Christ, and that by the Father is meant the Eternal Deity, by the Son, the Humanity he assumed and made divine in the world, and by the Holy Spirit, the proceeding emanation and operation of the Divinity and Humanity united in one Divine Person; and that these three Essentials of the manifested God may be properly compared to soul, body, and proceeding operation in every individual man. Thus it is clear that while the Unitarian denies the existence of

ny kind of Trinity in the Divine Nature, the member of the New Church not only believes that God is one Divine person, but he also believes that in this One Divine Person there exists a Divine Trinity, of essential, constituent principles, which is the true Scripture Trinity in Unity. With the Unitarian, the New Church denies the existence of three Divine Persons, and repudiates every Trinitarian doctrine founded thereon, such as the vicarious sacrifice of the One Divine Person's *Body* to appease the wrath of another divine person; and the supposed way of salvation by relieving One Divine Person to be propitiated by what it is said another Divine person did or suffered on the cross; and also believing that a third Divine Person sanctifies the soul of the believer, by his own separate operation, and in which the other two Persons bear no *actual* part, or with which they have nothing to do, beyond giving their consent to such and such an individual's sanctification. The discriminating reader who desires to do strict justice to the opinions of his fellow-creatures will perceive, that however the member of the New Church may agree with the Unitarian in the denial of these Trinitarian Doctrines, *he does not, therefore, unite with him*, in any degree, *in his affirmation*, that Jesus Christ is a mere man, and that there is no Divine Trinity at all!

It was not only a repudiation of the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice as taught by the Baptists, that led our friend to separate himself from their communion; he also felt himself conscientiously called upon to disown several others of their doctrines connected with Christian *practice*. No doctrine was of more importance in his view than that concerning salvation; and he felt deeply interested in ascertaining what salvation really is and implies. He perceived clearly, that the salvation of the Gospel is emphatically a salvation *from sin*. He remembered the words of the angel to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for *he shall save his people from their sins*." But he found that because Paul has written, "We shall be *saved from wrath* through him," the import of the latter sentence is generally taken by itself, as if salvation meant nothing but a deliverance from punishment, and the



declaration of the angel above cited is as little regarded as if it did not exist. It is not seen that the two declarations should be taken together, as unitedly declaring man's salvation, *first*, from sin; and, *secondly*, from the consequences, figuratively called "wrath." The want of this just and proper discrimination, Job detected in the 13th article of the Baptist Confession, which strangely declares, that "Regeneration prepares the soul *for salvation*!" He saw from these words, that no proper idea of salvation can exist in the Baptist church, that is, no such idea as is implied in the declaration of the angel just cited; he saw that "*from their sins*" is interpreted, if at all referred to, as meaning, from *the punishment* of their sins: he saw clearly that salvation *from sin* is really the same thing as regeneration; for a man cannot be saved from sin except by being regenerated; and, consequently, to say that "regeneration prepares the soul for salvation," is improperly to confine the idea of salvation to remission of punishment, or escape from hell torment. Thus the wording of this article countenances the very general and detrimental error, that a man may be saved from eternal punishment without being regenerated, that is, without being saved from sin, or without being regenerated in the way described by Peter, where he says, "Ye have purified your souls *in obeying the truth*, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love, being born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God [that is "the Word made flesh"] which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter i. 22). This is the true regeneration and salvation from sin, and which comes only by "*obeying the truth*." This it is *that brings* into the soul that gift of "unfeigned love," which is the only sure sign of the soul having been "born again," and of its having "passed from death unto life." What a sad thing it is, that a sect which has been formed to preach salvation to the world, should be ignorant what salvation really is; or, at the best, should possess only a very confused and partial idea of its real nature! And when it is considered that the Baptists declare, that salvation and pardon *are the very same thing*, what can they mean by saying, that "Regeneration prepares the soul *for pardon*?" Is not this a strange confusion of ideas?

But this same article of the Confession, Job found to contain still more serious grounds of objection, and to involve a contradiction as palpable, as its practical effect must be deeply and extensively injurious. This article recites, "That Repentance, regeneration, and holiness in heart AND LIFE are ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY in order TO PREPARE the soul for salvation and eternal glory. BUT, FAITH in Christ, and THAT ONLY, *or the believing of the Gospel*, ENTITLES poor sinful mortals to every part of happiness." This puzzled our poor friend sadly! He found the generally popular doctrine of the acceptableness of a death-bed repentance was practically built upon the latter clause of this article, which asserts that *simple believing* "ENTITLES" a sinner to every part of happiness, that is, in other words, to heaven, although a good life, according to the first clause, is "*absolutely necessary to prepare a man for salvation and eternal glory.*" How, he exclaimed, can these two clauses possibly be reconciled? How can a man be *entitled* to go to heaven if he is not *prepared* for it? Is it possible that God can give a *title* to heaven to people whom he pronounces unprepared, and therefore unfit for it? If I imagine a miserable man who has closed a life of debauchery with declaring, that he "believes the Gospel" *as set forth by some General Baptist*, and I then follow him, in thought, into the spiritual world;—I presume the angels there will perceive that he is not *prepared* for heaven by the "*absolutely necessary holiness of heart AND LIFE,*" and therefore that he is quite unfit for the society of "*the just made perfect.*" Nevertheless, he claims admission into heaven, *notwithstanding his unprepared state* "*in heart and life*;"—but the angels may not admit *the unprepared*;—he then pleads that he is "*entitled*" to eternal happiness *by faith*; the "Reverend" — told him that "*God had forgiven him!*" Surely this is very mysterious indeed! God is represented as giving a title to *unprepared* sinners to enter heaven *because they believe*, and as having given commandment to his ministers to say so; while He has given commandment to "*the reapers, the angels*" (Matt. xiii. 39), to *shut them out*, BECAUSE *they are unprepared!* But how are the angels to proceed under *such* conflicting instructions? Can they

avoid pronouncing the title and certificate of the Baptist ministers—a forgery and a cheat?—Is it true, *or is it not true*, that “*without holiness,—without personal holiness,—no man shall see the Lord?*” I cannot but think that this statement that God *does* require personal holiness, and yet that *he will dispense with it* on condition of having faith,—and thus that he requires it, and does not require it, at the same time,—places God in a very irreverent light! and therefore I am compelled to adhere to the *first* clause of the article which insists on a holy life, as being agreeable to Scripture, and to reject the latter clause, which dispenses with it, as being at the same time contradictory to the *first* clause, and equally opposed to Scripture, and to every rational idea that can be formed of the nature of God, and of the nature of man. Well may the latter clause commence with a “*But* ;” it is a “*BUT*” indeed! it is not only opposed to the clause it pretends to qualify, but it is likewise altogether at variance with every principle of moral justice, and directly tends to weaken the observance of moral obligation, by setting forth, that *mere belief* WITHOUT PERSONAL HOLINESS will entitle a man, however sinful he may be, to heavenly happiness! The Apostle John says, that “*He that doeth righteousness is righteous* ;” consequently, *he that doeth not righteousness is unrighteous* ; NO MATTER FOR THAT, says the General Baptist Confession, and still more strongly say the General Baptist preachers,—no matter for the want of a holy life—PROVIDED A MAN HAS FAITH! Now, let the preachers say what they will, said Job, about this part of their *Confession*, *this* is the only construction that will be put upon it in practice, especially by those hearers (and they are not a few) who are such lovers of the world that the love of the Father is not in them (1 John ii. 15). It is true they may not be openly fraudulent, nor openly licentious lovers of the world ; but still they may be equally, if not more deeply guilty, in regard to those subtle forms of the love of self and the world which are more hidden, because they lie deeper, and which embody a greater degree of malignity, and present a greater degree of opposition to true charity, than some evils of a grosser sort. Secret lovers of the world may love money with all their heart and soul, and to obtain it, may,

in various ways, be *secretly* deceptive and oppressive. Although diligent attendants on the outward worship of God, they may, notwithstanding, be guilty of the idolatry of covetousness, for "*covetousness is idolatry*" (Col. iii. 5), and also be amongst those sensualists, "*whose god is their belly*;" they may, at the same time, be such "*lovers of their own selves*," as to be in reality worshipers of themselves, either for their property, or from pride, or even for their supposed piety and holiness! And all this may co-exist with a certain degree of exterior morality. Such characters know very well what is sinful in the *sight of men*; and they are taught that they must give an evidence, in their works before men, of the sincerity of their faith; and therefore they do not swear, nor appear inebriated in public; they are honest to the *letter* of the law; they have also their virtues or good deeds; they subscribe to religious institutions; and are regular attendants at chapel; but so far as they take their standard from human repute, rather than from a *just* estimate of the *true* holiness prescribed by the Gospel, fortified by the conviction that it is absolutely necessary to salvation to practise *that* holiness, their idea of sin, at the very best, is very external, limited, and imperfect. And when Job came to enjoy the light of the New Church, he saw clearly, that there are grievous sins, which even highly esteemed religious professors commit, either because they have not been properly, that is *practically* instructed; or because they never practise self-examination, by instituting a faithful comparison of their acts and motives with the *full* requirements of Divine Truth. They too have heard, that "*all unrighteousness is sin*;" but they do not account it to be "*unrighteousness*" to feel bitterness against Unitarians, or "*Swedenborgians*," or to condemn them to hell, or to speak evil of their sentiments without knowing, or caring to inquire into, the truth of their hear-say charges! They do not know, or appear not to know, that it is an act of "*unrighteousness*" to attribute to their respectable fellow-citizens sentiments which they disown, and even despise and detest. Their zeal is so ardent, that they cannot withstand the temptation to commit a "*pious fraud*," by circulating unfounded imputations, in order to impede the spread of doctrines

which they deem erroneous, and *assert* to be injurious. *They do not see the evil of all this*, partly because they have not been taught better, and partly because their eyes are closed against the view of it by their own selfishness, and in this case they do not see it, because *they will not see it!* All such proceedings of intolerance, bigotry, injustice, and falsehood, cannot, indeed, be known to be "unrighteousness" by those who are guilty of them, while such dense ignorance prevails concerning the *true* righteousness which is called *charity*, and which seldom, if ever, forms the subject of evangelical sermons. In this case, what the Scriptures solemnly condemn as "unrighteousness," passes for a pious zeal, a contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints! It is owing to this dense ignorance of the true nature of charity, and an equally dense ignorance of the true nature of the mental constitution of man, and of the nature of God, as man's Great Exemplar, that moroseness often passes for spiritual-mindedness! I find, said Job, that a morose tempered individual of a religious exterior, whose heart is indifferent to social happiness, and whose understanding is incapable of surveying and estimating, and whose feelings are incapable of sympathizing with, the various states of intelligence, and the necessarily varying tastes, of the different classes of society; whose mind is ignorant of the happy art of bringing good out of all things which are innocent in themselves, and of turning all things into the means of promoting general happiness and content, being indeed ignorant of the very elements of which happiness consists; I find that such an individual as this, in the plenitude of his arrogance, coldness, bitterness, acerbity, and narrow-mindedness, will presume to denounce all kinds of enjoyment not to his own taste as sinful, and openly proclaim that such only as resemble himself are spiritually-minded!

Persons whose moral characters are thus miserably formed, or rather unformed, require that the *first* clause of the Article of the Confession under consideration, and which inculcates the "*absolute necessity* of a holy life," should be plainly, intelligently, and diligently set forth, without qualification or reservation. But even if this were

done, inasmuch as the *second* clause, *which requires only belief*, is presented to such characters at the same time, they are at liberty to make their election out of the two, and to take which they will; and when their mental taste, arising from their particular habits of thinking and acting, is considered, there cannot be a doubt as to which clause will permanently engage their attention. Thus, by means of this double-faced article of faith, all the differing members of the congregation are conveniently accommodated with a creed suited to their respective habits and tastes; and this, in practice, will be found to work in the following manner: the "*good and honest heart*" will appropriate to itself, with much sincerity, the *first* clause, while the "*lovers of their own selves*," and the "*lovers of the world*," will greedily seize upon the *last*, and pay no attention to the *first*! No wonder, under such circumstances, that a church should increase in numbers; for how can it do otherwise, while it thus provides pasture both for sheep and for goats? while it presents doctrines fitted to *all* tastes,—to the taste of the good, and the bad, of saints, and of sinners, that is, provided always, that the inwardly unworthy do not sin *in such wise* as to bring disgrace *on the cause*? Such a double-faced creed may be compared to a guide-post whose arms are so constructed as to turn round with the wind. Here is an "absolutely necessary good life" for the scrupulous, and "a title to heaven by believing only" for the unscrupulous!! Thus, in a sense not meant by the apostle, the *Confession* is "*all things to all men*." But although the result may be an accession of members, is it likely that the members of such a church will be distinguished by "the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit?" or by that "love of their Christian brethren" which alone furnishes conclusive evidence that a man professing to believe the gospel has "passed from death unto life?" (1 John iii. 14.) But this double-faced Confession is not peculiar to the Baptists; it has been adopted from the authors of the so-called "Reformation," by the so-called "Evangelicals" of every name!—

I see, said Job, that there is a natural tendency in a religion of "faith only," to become a merely *talking* religion; but there is a tendency in a religion which makes

goodness or charity the principal thing, to become a *practical* religion. Goodness was the end for which revelation was given. God revealed Himself to man's faith, in order to conduct him by truth to goodness, which is the likeness of Himself. Charity or goodness is the *end*, and faith is only the means to that end. To make more account of the means than the end is absolute infatuation. The case may be compared to that of a tradesman. The knowledge of his business is the *means* whereby he is able to obtain success; and that success is the *end* which he has in view. If he pursues *that end* by diligently using the *means*, he will prosper; but if he takes no thought about the *end*, but contents himself with continually *talking* about the *means*, he cannot prosper! So neither can a church prosper in heavenly graces, which does not pursue them with *heart and soul*, as the *chief end*, or AS CONSTITUTING SALVATION ITSELF, but is content with talking, or with preaching and hearing, about *faith*, which is nothing more than the *means* to salvation, or to the attainment of that image and likeness of God, which consists in genuine goodness and charity, and which cannot be thought of as existing separately from a good life. This is that true love of God which the Apostle speaks of when he says, "*This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments;*" "*Whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in Him:*" "*If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us; because he hath given us of his Spirit;*" that is, his Spirit of love, by which we are made likenesses and partakers of the Divine Nature.

I can readily believe and admit, continued Job, that God willingly forgives the sins of all who believe, and come unto Him by a sincere faith, earnestly desiring forgiveness; for if He did not forgive them, it is not very likely that he would give them his *Holy Spirit*, and we are assured that "*He giveth his Holy Spirit to them that ask him*" (Luke xi. 13). This grace is not given to them, however, as making them fit for heaven *all at once*, nor are they fit for heaven merely because they *profess* it: it is given to them in order that, by making a diligent and faithful *use of*

if, they may *gradually* become prepared for heaven, through "the washing of regeneration." We read that Jesus "gave power TO BECOME sons of God to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12). But will any one say that this is the same as giving them "a title to every part of happiness?" Doubtless this title cannot belong to them of right, according to the tenor of the gift of the "power" described, until they *have actually become*, by the use of that power, the "sons of God." We read also, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that on account of what Jesus Christ did and suffered, we may "*come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and grace to help in time of need.*" But is it the fact that *immediately after* obtaining mercy, and thus forgiveness, by faith, we *also* receive "a title to every part of happiness?" Certainly not; we only receive, it is said, *grace to help in time of need*; and must not that grace be improved by us, by our accepting and using its aid, before we can get our "title to happiness?" Does not the Scripture say, "*Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off?*" Does the Christian soldier gain his title to the victor's crown *as soon as* by faith he has enlisted under the Captain of his salvation? or must he not first be tried, as to his valour and fidelity? Is it not said that "*when he is [or has been] TRIED he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to THEM THAT LOVE HIM?*" And does not our Lord Himself promise all manner of Christian blessings "*to him that overcometh?*" and that, in no less than the *eight* following distinct declarations? "*To him that overcometh* will I give to eat of the tree of life." "*He that overcometh* shall not be hurt of the second death." "*To him that overcometh* will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "*He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him* will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." "*He that overcometh* shall be clothed with white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life" (which implies that if he *does not overcome* his name *will* be blotted out). "*He that overcometh* will I



make a pillar in the temple of God ; and I will write upon him my new name." " *To him that overcometh* will I grant to sit with me on my throne" (Rev. ii. iii). And to crown all, " *He that overcometh SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS*, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. xxi. 7). Surely this *overcoming* must be a very distinct thing from mere believing! and very distinctly are our overcoming and believing distinguished by John, where he says, " This is the victory that *overcometh the world*, even our *faith*." But faith cannot overcome the world on a death-bed, when the world ceases to charm and allure! Our Lord does not say, " he that believeth in me loveth me, but " *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH ME.*" " *This is love*, says John, *that we walk after his commandments.*" If believing, which is no more than a spiritual enlisting, gives the desired title to heaven, then the endurance of conflicts of mind, fighting the good fight, and overcoming the world by faith, are altogether redundant and unnecessary ; they are, indeed, a needless torture, and a work of supererogation! Is faith love? Is not the promised reward to be gained only by love? And how is love gained except by obedience? " *Ye have purified your souls,*" says Peter, " *IN OBEYING THE TRUTH, through the Spirit, UNTO UNFEIGNED LOVE.*" What pains appear to have been taken to confound what God has made distinct, and to obscure what God has made plain! Again we read, " *Let us hold fast grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God* [to all, that is, who have believed but have not served Him acceptably by doing all that he requires] *is a consuming fire*" (See Heb. iv. 16 ; xii. 28). Since the Scripture describes God as always " *ready to forgive,*" I cannot hesitate to admit that faith readily and immediately procures forgiveness of sins ; nor do I doubt that such forgiveness admits to a participation in " *the grace of God which bringeth salvation ;*" but surely the grace,—the pardoning grace, which it is said *bringeth* salvation, is not, and cannot be, salvation itself? Are we not told, that *after* our sins are forgiven ; *after* we have become full members of the true and living church ; *after* we have received grace and adoption, we

have yet to *make our calling and election sure*, and *work out our own salvation* with fear and trembling? But if salvation be obtained merely by believing, how can it yet remain to be worked out? However, the words of the Lord Jesus are quite conclusive, and, with honest and sincere minds, must preclude all possibility of dispute. In the most solemn manner the Lord testified, that no one who believes merely, *without doing works of charity* to his fellow-creatures, can possibly be accepted. (See Matt. vii. 21, 23; Luke xiii. 25, 26.)

When Job had improved his powers of discrimination by means of the doctrines of the New Church, he saw clearly that Christians commonly think of pardon as an act which takes place *within the divine mind*, followed by a command of God to the Devil, (whom some describe as if he were God's jailer,) to give up the captive sinner, and cease to claim him as one appointed to punishment. But this idea Job perceived to be utterly fallacious, gross, and absurd. He saw that forgiveness is an act of God *in man's mind*; that it is the operation of his spirit of grace, acting concurrently with man's consent and co-operation, in order to lead man to repentance and salvation. He saw that to suppose otherwise, is to suppose the Divine mind capable of change, whereas every idea which implies change can only be applicable to the mind of a creature. And when he saw that it is generally supposed that pardon admits the sinner into heaven, and that such admission is all that is necessary for the enjoyment of eternal happiness, he could not but consider such persons as lamentably ignorant of the plain truth, that a sinner could not possibly be happy in heaven, even if he were admitted therein; and that no one can be happy in heaven unless he has become *fitted* for it, by *freely* shunning all evils as sins against God, while in the enjoyment of health and liberty upon earth.

In further reflecting upon the universal persuasion that faith alone, and by itself, admits to eternal happiness, our friend remembered how very numerous the declarations of Scripture are, that we shall be *judged according to our works*,—that we shall ALL be "*judged according to the DEEDS done in the body*;" while it is never said that we

shall be judged, condemned, or acquitted, *according to our faith*. Do the General Baptists and other "Evangelicals" mean and believe, that we are *first* to be judged, and either to be condemned or acquitted, according to our *works*; and then, that we are to be judged *over again* according to *another and totally different standard*? and that those who have been condemned, (and *some* will say *all must be condemned* who are "judged according to their *works*," ) on *showing that they died in FAITH*, will have their condemnation on the score of *WORKS reversed*? But did not God know that they had faith? Why then did he put them on their trial for their works? Did *they* know during their *first* trial, that they need not be at all anxious about the result of it, as they would be sure to be victorious on the *second*, having that *faith* which would immediately procure the reversal of an unfavourable sentence? It cannot be supposed that God would put believers to *needless* torture, by first condemning them to hell for their evil or defective *works*, and afterwards acquitting them, and taking them to heaven, on account of their *faith*! A judgment *according to the deeds done in the body*, is a solemn and most edifying consideration, but the preaching of a judgment according to works is completely "*rendered of none effect*" by the preaching at the same time of an *acquittal according to faith*! Surely this doctrine of salvation by faith alone must be a most awful and soul destroying delusion! No wonder that in so many professors of it, it saps the foundation of all *practical* love to God and man, and all real inward purity of heart!

It is indeed a terrible mistake, to confound the pardon of sin, with salvation from sin; and the first acceptance of grace, with a fitness for, or a title to heavenly happiness; and thus to mistake enlistment for victory! What could the author of the Confession *himself* mean? Could he really have been weak enough to mean, and wicked enough to conceal his meaning, that the "*absolutely necessary*" *holy* LIFE need not be *longer* than the *few moments* before death which are required to say, "*I believe*;" nor *holier* than the single act, or, rather, WORD made it, of saying, "*I thank God for a sense of pardoning love*?" Truly this would be a dreadful delusion indeed!—And yet

this is verily and actually the construction put upon this *article* by esteemed General Baptists! And no wonder, for they cannot help themselves; they must either give up this article as contradictory to itself; or else force a new and strange meaning upon it! If conscience prevailed, one would think that they would choose the former; but it appears that, not having moral courage sufficient for this, they adopt the latter! But of what value are words when their meaning can be so little depended upon? *After* a good life, faith and thankfulness on a death-bed might properly be called a happy *death*, and is usually so called, but how it can be a good *life*, surpasses all comprehension! Is not the time previous to a man's being in the apprehension of death called his life? And is not all the time he is *in the prospect of death*, called *his death*?—a happy death, or a miserable death, as the case may be? Are even life and death to be confounded in order to bolster up glaring contradictions of doctrine?

Job turned to the 13th Chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, and read over the good qualities which the Apostle includes in, and considers as constituent of *True Charity*. I find, said he, *Charity practises ALL the virtues*, and therefore True Charity is the same as true righteousness, which comprises all the virtues, and consequently, when the Apostle says, "*He that doeth righteousness is righteous*," he says the same as if he had said, "*He that has charity is in a state of salvation*." I find that Paul includes in charity, forbearance, mercy, benevolence, beneficence, generosity, modesty, humility, prudence, disinterestedness, patience, candour, sincerity, and purity: since charity, then, includes *all these virtues*, no wonder that the Apostle declares that charity is greater than faith! "*The greatest of these is charity*!" A man may believe in an instant, without inflicting any self-mortification; but how much of self-denial is necessary in order to the attainment of all these virtues! But what becomes of Paul's testimony, if the General Baptists are in the right? *They* say, that if a man *only believes* he may be "entitled to every part of happiness," although he has *no charity*, because he has never cultivated the virtues of which charity is constituted! But what is this but to make charity *altogether*

*inferior* to faith? and thus to contradict the apostle *faith*. If faith saves, where the want of charity condemns; thus faith saves, and charity does not, because salvation is by *faith only*; then every one possessed of common sense may see, that, in such case, the Divine Judge must account *faith to be greater than charity*,—greater in his esteem, and more acceptable to him than charity. To be *judged according to our works*, is the same thing as being judged according to our charity, or the want of it; and this is the Scripture judgment. But if we are to be *judged according to our faith*, we cannot ALSO be judged according to our works, or charity: the Scripture, however, does not contradict itself; the judgment according to faith is nothing but an invention of man, and the only Scripture judgment is a judgment according to works.

I know very well what is usually said in reply to such statements as the above, by the advocates of *justification by faith alone*. I know that they, being naturally indignant at the imputation of indifference about living well, or of being instrumental to leading others into such indifference, and being aware that if such an imputation can fairly be fixed upon them, *or rather upon their doctrine*, they will be reckoned by moral men as enemies in practice, however unintentionally so, to virtue, and thus to the good order and well-being of civil society; being aware of all this, they are naturally desirous to shew that a regard to goodness, good order, and virtue, is reconcileable with their doctrine. In the effort, however, to reconcile these anomalies and incompatibilities, they have certainly shewn, as I am conscientiously compelled to conclude, more zeal and ingenuity, than straightforward honesty and sound sense. They say "We affirm that no faith is a true faith, unless it be *followed* by good works, and no faith but a true faith is saving; nevertheless, salvation comes not from the works, because if it did, works would be meritorious, but from the faith only, from which the works originate; and thus it is that we are saved by faith only." Not a word of this, however, can be admitted *as true*, or even *as sincere*, until the doctrine of a death-bed repentance be totally given up. Until this be done, the above declaration is altogether

and deceptive, inasmuch as faith is, on a death-bed, held to be a saving faith, *although it cannot* be followed by good works. This, indeed, is commonly met with the objection, "You cannot know that the faith of the deceased *could not have been* followed by good works, if he had;" and to this it is sufficient to reply, "Neither can we know that it would."

Supposing this special pleading in proof that faith alone, could be admitted, notwithstanding the conclusion it involves, (namely, that man *must*, in order to be saved, have works *as well as* faith, and nevertheless, *may* be saved by faith *only*), the question would remain to be answered, "*What effect will this sort of argument have upon society?*" Will it not be found, clearly stated, that the well-disposed of this persuasion will live as if they believed good deeds to be no less necessary to salvation than faith; while the ill-disposed will dily avail themselves of the offered inducement of salvation by faith only, to make *their* religion consist of *but* faith, that is, nothing but words, or mere talk? Will it not be seen by the latter characters, that their *outward* good works, (so far as they perform them,) are *not* genuine good works, because genuine good works can only result from *faith and charity united*, and faith cannot be united with charity, except by the practice of repentance and obedience, *with a view to salvation from sin*: they will see that good works can no more spring from *faith only*, as commonly asserted, than vegetation can spring from the cold light of winter; nor will they see that the vital warmth of charity only, which gives genuine faithfulness; and that such vital warmth can only be communicated from heaven to those who give themselves to God, *and to others according to his will*, agree to his holy commandments (2 Cor. viii. 5). Truly it is a *view* of salvation *by faith alone* which procures such a series of *unproductive* conversions, and should *any* church resent selfishness, distinctly, and without qualification, that no salvation can be effected without the union of charity, faith, and good works, in the minds of those who possess the Scriptures, such a church would attract nothing but neglect and reproach! The present

age is, in fact, so selfish, that even its morality, while it simulates benevolence, is nothing but refined selfishness, at the very best! It would, indeed, be a *prima facie* argument against the *purity of any* doctrine, if its ready and general reception proved *that it fitted the corrupt taste of the unreasoning and selfish multitude.*

As for the assertion that to believe in salvation by faith *only* excludes self-merit, while to believe salvation to be from works as well as from faith, admits it, the assertion is entirely gratuitous and fallacious. Nothing can exclude self-merit, but a sincere belief that *every good* act, both of the mind and life, and thus of charity as well as faith, is performed by divine grace, and thus that "by grace we are saved *from our sins*, through *the influence and guidance of faith or truth*," and that, consequently, both faith and charity are from the Lord alone. Who can prove that this *cannot* be believed by a Christian who is persuaded that works are, to the full, as conducive to salvation as doctrine or faith? The assertion alluded to is, in fact, sufficiently contradicted by the self-righteous demeanour, and, frequently, arrogant assumption, of the solifidian disclaimers of self-merit. The argument from experience as well as reason, lies all on the other side. No one can sincerely *obey*, in order to his salvation from sin, without striking a blow at self-love, and thus at self-merit, by actually counteracting his inherent selfish tendency to forbidden acts; but acts, or rather words, of mere belief, leave self-love and corrupt nature *undisturbed*, and therefore they very well agree with self-merit, which is invariably the offspring of unrestrained, unmortified, ~~unremoved~~ self-love. He who obeys for the sake of salvation *from sin*, gives God the glory by *actions* as well as by words; but he who believes that he may be saved *from punishment* by mere belief, glorifies God *in words only*. In reality, therefore, there is a natural affinity between the belief in salvation by faith *only*, and the arrogation of self-merit, however the latter may be disclaimed in words. There is, indeed, even in the Romish penances, when joined with habitual moral obedience more to mortify pride and self-love, and of consequence self-merit, than in the mere belief that faith alone saves.

In art. 17. the Baptists say, "That *true* believers receive the Spirit by faith, by which they are regenerated, and are *from that time* meet for glory;" but the New Testament says, on the contrary, that the Spirit is given to those who believe, in order to give them *power to become* sons of God (John i. 12); and the Apostle says, "As many as *are led* by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). Thus the Scripture attributes regeneration, or the becoming sons of God, "*meet for glory*," to "*the obedience of faith*," but the Baptists attribute the same to faith *only*! Perhaps, however, they will say, "*true* believers" are those who *do* obey; and the reason why they obey is, because they were regenerated or renewed by the Spirit as soon as they believed, and so were rendered willing to obey; but, said Job Abbott, if a man is not able to obey until he is *thus* rendered willing to obey, how can he believe, until he is, by the same Spirit, *made willing* to believe? Surely free-will is not *sincerely* believed in by the General Baptists, although they profess it, or they would not reason in this manner. The *same article* proceeds to say, that these regenerate persons who are "*meet for glory*," "*ought, by activity in all holiness, to be laying up treasure in heaven, where they shall be rewarded according to their works*:" so that the whole article declares,—1st, That *by faith* a man is made "*meet for glory*," and yet that he will be rewarded according to his *works*: and, 2ndly, That he becomes a child of God, and "*meet for glory*," as soon as he becomes a "*true believer*," that is, *prior* to his laying up treasure in heaven by active holiness. But who are *not* true believers, if the death-bed believer is a true believer? He cannot *prove* the sound quality of his faith by his life, and therefore the quality of faith is not dependant on this proof in any other case. I see clearly that *all* are willing to believe themselves "*true believers*," born again of the Spirit, through faith, in a moment, and "*from that time meet for glory*:" but I see also as clearly, that the greater number of these "*true believers*" are satisfied with the former portion of this article, and do not trouble themselves about the latter part, which calls upon them, "*by activity in all holiness, to be laying up treasure*



in heaven." Neither do they at all believe that they shall be "rewarded according to their *works*;" and, indeed, why should they?—They believe themselves "meet for glory" by faith, and *what more can they want?* The first and second portions of this article are like two doors, the first for sinners, who do not *love* to do good; and the second for saints, who delight in the law of God, not only in their inward man, but also in their outward life; and seeing that the two doors thus opened are capable of admitting *all sorts of persons* into the Baptist church, and after death into heaven, excepting infidels and heretics (!), it is a wonder that all do not flock in: and doubtless all *would* become General Baptists, were it not that there is still too much common sense left in mankind to admit of their believing two things so incompatible, though uttered in the same breath, as becoming "*meet for glory by faith*," and being "*rewarded according to works!*" Even the children of this world, who in too many particulars are wiser than the professed children of light, are able to see through the flimsy web, woven of contradictions, of which such articles of faith as that under consideration are fabricated; and when they see through them, they despise them! Never was any article of faith ever penned more inconsistent with itself, or more palpably contradictory than *this* article!

Job wondered how it could be, that any educated or sensible man, like the author of the Confession, could write in article 13, that "faith only [or by itself] entitles to every part of happiness," and, in direct contradiction to it, write, in article 23, as follows,—"*The final judgment of mankind, and the rewards or punishments consequent upon it, will be according to our works*; those who died in a state of sin and neglect of God will be sent into everlasting punishment, but *the righteous* received to life eternal: the wicked will be punished *in proportion* to their wickedness, and the righteous rewarded *according* to their righteousness." What plausible excuse an individual, and especially a religious Body, can assign for putting forth statements so opposed to each other, and yet as being, taken *together*, the truth of the Gospel, surpasses all my imagination, said Job! The *first* of these extracts declares, that all will be

judged *according to their faith* ; the *second*, that all will be judged *according to their works* ; the *first* implies, and is always explained to mean, that a man who has *never* practised righteousness, but who only believes on his death-bed, may be admitted into heaven ; that is, *rewarded* in heaven for his *faith* ; the *second* says, that all will be rewarded according to their *righteousness* or *works* : the *first* declares and means that a *certain kind* of belief only will admit to happiness ; the *second*, that the righteous, whatever their creed, will be saved ! Such are the contradictions which naturally arise from setting forth two opposite standards, of judgment, one according to faith, and the other according to works, and both in operation at the same time ! Whatever good works a man may do, they can avail him nothing, unless he has *that* faith which the Baptists profess ! These sectarians cannot, of course, mean, that *any* faith, *however different from their own*, will save, for if they did, they must mean that any *false* faith whatever is equally saving with the belief of the truth ! How is it that "Evangelicals" cannot see, that two such opposite and inconsistent standards of judgment as faith, *true or false*, and works *good or bad*, cannot co-exist, and be in operation at the same time. The standard of *works*, said Job, is reasonable and scriptural, and therefore, I *must* reject the doctrine of justification by faith only ; for when two opposite standards are presented to me by the same parties, I, as a rational being, am compelled to reject one of them.

At a subsequent period of his life, Job thus thought within himself : I do not suppose that these opposite standards were purposely imagined, in order to practise a deception upon unthinking persons, but I perceive that, in practice, they are certainly made use of to deceive, by being occasionally made a cover to conceal existing bigotry, while pretensions are made to a liberality of sentiment which has no real existence. Sometimes it is *expedient* to conciliate a person of a different faith ; and sometimes a repugnance is felt to say to a respectable neighbor, "You will certainly be damned for not believing as I do !" In these cases, the *real* sentiment is concealed, and a belief is professed, that the good "of *every* denomination" will be saved ; but, by an act of disingenuous mental reservation

"every denomination" *always* means "every denomination which believes *as we believe*, or which interprets the Scriptures on the subject of the Trinity and Atonement *as we interpret them!*" Thus the standard of a judgment according to works is occasionally and deceptively resorted to, and made use of as a mask to conceal the horrid face of bigotry; but when Evangelicals converse among themselves, they recur to the standard of *faith only*, that is, of *THEIR OWN* faith only, and by it dispose of their heretical neighbors without the least compunction or reservation, and coolly consign them, *for their difference of creed*, to everlasting flames! I wonder, thought Job, that they can have the face to quarrel with the Roman Catholics for bigotry! Assuredly the very ground of all religious persecution is this: "Believe as we believe, or you will be damned!" Why are Church-Evangelicals, Baptists, Independents, or Methodists, who, as conscientious men, *must thus think*, whatever they may say, to be allowed to call themselves liberal, and to brand the Roman Catholics as bigots? If I could believe that all go to hell who do not believe as I believe, I should long to become a persecutor *from a motive of benevolence*? I should deplore the hindrance to my *driving* people to heaven, which is presented in the spirit of the age! And if I allow that the solifidian sects are *as benevolent* as myself, I must conclude that if they had the power and opportunity once possessed by the Romish church, they would be as ready to persecute the bodies of heretics, for the good of their souls, and this from pure benevolence, as any of their Romish predecessors. A "faith alone" religion must be *essentially* a persecuting religion; and if, at some periods, it appears to be otherwise, it is only for want of a favorable opportunity for the development of its essential and inherent quality. "Ah, but," the Protestant will say, "no faith will save, but that which is founded on conviction; a forced faith will not save."—Very good; but where lies the difference between telling a dying sinner, "Believe, on pain of eternal flames," and telling a heretic, "Believe, on pain of the stake?" Is not the faith induced, in both cases, equally a forced faith, and thus not a faith founded on conviction? The burning of heretics is but a legitimate carry-

ing out into practice of the belief in faith as the standard of final judgment; and I cannot see how a *benevolent* man who is determined to carry out this belief *fully*, can avoid becoming a persecutor—but, doubtless, the secret working of Divine love inwardly withdraws those who are under its influence, from carrying out their mistaken principles; and thus I account for the circumstance of the *best* of the Evangelicals not becoming virulent persecutors. The bigot does but act up to his principles, in persecuting others, and perhaps from a spurious benevolence,—a benevolence not engendered by Divine Love; but the liberal-hearted solifidian acts contrary to his own principles, because his sound heart disowns the faulty convictions of his head, or rather say, his adopted persuasions, arising from the prejudices of education. Doubtless it is sometimes owing to the collision of the convictions of a good heart and a bigoted creed, and sometimes from a deceptive use of the opposite standards of faith and works, that the following occurrence takes place. As a New Church Christian, said Job, (after he had become one,) I ask a Baptist minister, “*Do you believe that I shall be judged according to my works?*” Remembering his “Confession,” he replies, “Certainly.” I further ask him “Can I be judged to eternal life without believing that Jesus was punished for my sins?” and to this, in conformity with his “Confession,” he answers “No;” so that he first gives me, “heretic” as he knows me to be, an assurance of eternal happiness notwithstanding my heresy, provided I live a good life; and then he takes away from me all hope, *because* I believe not that which he knows, all the while, that I do not believe! The first is the answer either of his pretended liberality or of his better feelings; and the latter is the reply dictated by the bigotry of his creed and his party! But he is unaware of his inconsistency, and of the practical ignorance of the distinction between right and wrong, which he thus exhibits. He is, indeed, so engrossed with what he calls the “Gospel,” that he has neither time nor inclination for that moral culture by which the moral judgment is perfected, and qualified to decide, on the instant, accurately and consistently, upon all cases that are brought before it. He does not see that he commits any breach

of truth by saying in the same breath, "All may be saved who live well, whatever their creed;" and, "No one, however well he may live, can be saved, unless he believes as I believe!" Had I been content with the answer given to my first question, I might have been cheated into the belief of the liberality of the Baptists; but the answer to the second question shews me their real opinion, which lurks underneath, and the mask of liberality having fallen off, the bitter and sour face of bigotry is openly exposed to view.—Notwithstanding, however, their harsh and uncharitable judgments, said, Job, I pity such unjust and uncharitable judges, and I desire to say, with my Divine Master, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*"

There was another thing which tended to strengthen the conviction of our friend of the falsity of the doctrine of salvation by faith *only*, and that was the strangely anomalous conduct of those who inculcate that doctrine to dying persons who have led wicked lives. A Baptist believes that the faith dictated, by a Methodist or Independent, to a dying person, will, if he embraces it, save his soul, because these sects are agreed in what they deem the great fundamental truth, namely, that the Son of God was punished by his Father in man's place. But neither of these sects allow any saving efficacy to a creed differing in this particular from their own. If a departing Unitarian or member of the New Church should declare that he felt resigned and in peace, they would pity his awful delusion, and mournfully shake their heads, in token that *they* have no hope! But no sooner does a *dying* person declare, *under their influence and dictation*, that he believes that his sins are forgiven, however little he may understand of their doctrine, or of the Scriptures, and however uniformly wicked his previous life may have been, then they pronounce his soul to be certainly saved, and fit to join in eternal hallelujahs!! But what most impressed Job was this. So long as a *wicked* man is *in good health*, although he should profess *their* faith, and declare his certain assurance that his sins are forgiven, they would not believe him,—and why? Because he is a wicked man,—and *is in good*

*health!* But supposing the same man to be taken sick, and to appear *likely to die*, and *then* to make the same declaration, they would immediately believe it, and give to it all the credit of a voice from heaven! A sick man, and especially a dying man, when delivering such a testimony as this, is regarded as an oracle! they have no doubt of his being saved, because, in the prospect of death, *he says he shall!* It is because he is likely to die (and certainly if he should not recover he will not afterwards by his bad conduct convict them of credulity) that they give to his words a supernatural force! But why should a man's evidence in his own favor be taken implicitly in sickness more than in health? and especially when his mind is in no capacity for exercising sound judgment, or is raving incoherently in a religious strain, in consequence of delirium? When the sick man talks deliriously *on other* subjects, his solifidian friends and counsellors do not attend to him; but when he begins to protest that he is saved and going to heaven, they listen to him as to the voice of an angel, and with zealous excitement proceed to give glory to God! Our friend Job considered that this persuasion, that a man's evidence becomes worthy of attention *merely* because he is dangerously ill, is nothing short of moral insanity! And sometimes he witnessed with feelings of pity, mingled with disgust, the urgent entreaties of eager and noisy zealots to a dying man to *say* that he believes, and thus to *give evidence* that he has found peace! It was in vain that Job looked for any warrant in the Scriptures to justify such insane and reprehensible proceedings. He could no where find that a man is promised that he shall receive an *indubitable* assurance, on his death-bed, of his final happiness,—an assurance so certain, that all persons are bound to listen to the expression of it, as to the unerring voice of God! Truly, thought he, the accompaniments of the belief of the efficacy of a death-bed repentance, as presented in the behaviour of the believers of it, are all of a piece with that most unscriptural, irrational, and soul-destroying persuasion!\*

\* It is not long since that it was actually mentioned by a Baptist at the funeral of a notorious evil-liver, in a market town in Leicestershire,

Our friend Job thought it expedient to examine the opinions of the *Methodists* concerning justification and sanctification, and the supposed periods of their taking place, and the spiritual condition, respectively of those professing Christians, in whom they have, or have not taken place. He found that Mr. Wesley writes as follows:—“Justification is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins, and our acceptance with God. And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the spirit. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We *feel* the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit which is given us, producing love to mankind, and expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honor, and of money; together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper; in a word, changing the *earthly, sensual, devilish* mind into the mind which was in Christ Jesus.”

It may here be remarked that this statement is taken from “*The Chronicles of Methodism*,” and is given by the author, Dr. Sam. Warren, as containing the words of Mr. Wesley, and authorised by “the body” to be set forth as the true Methodist doctrine.

Ten pages further on in this publication, Mr. Wesley is represented as saying;—“Those who are justified, *gradually* die to sin, and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before death, God perfects them in love. This is the case of most, but not of all. God usually gives a considerable *time* for men *to receive light, to grow in grace, to do*

that there was ground for hope for him, because he seemed so concerned about religion; and what does the reader suppose was the evidence of that concern? It was this: awakening up from a doze, the sick man said to the persons at his bed-side, “*Let’s see, are there two or three Gods, did you say? Which am I to pray to first?*” And this was considered good evidence of a saving concern for religion! So eager are the adherents of a party to believe the *conversions* made *by their own people* to be effectual, that the gross absurdity which the sick man’s inquiries shewed to attach to the instruction he had received, was overlooked. The writer heard this from the respectable undertaker who was present and heard it.

*and suffer his will*, before they are either justified, [that is, pardoned!] or sanctified. But he does not invariably adhere to this. Sometimes he *cuts short his work*. He does the work of many years in an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have *done* or *suffered* nothing, and have not had *time* for gradual growth in either light or grace. *And may he not do what he will with his own?* God may cut short his work in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. And yet there is a gradual work before and after that moment, [that is, a *gradual* work of justification, pardon, and acceptance!]. So that one person may affirm, 'the work is gradual,' another, 'it is instantaneous,' without any manner of contradiction."

Job was amazed at the inconsistency exhibited in these words, when he considered the great number of persons involved in it, many of whom are educated men. But Job had learned that the habit of reasoning *rightly*, which is the same thing as having a sound judgment, and the talent of reasoning *plausibly*, are totally different in their nature and origin, and are acquired by a totally different direction and application of the powers of the mind. What, said he, could Mr. Wesley be thinking of when he wrote these extravagances? and what could the Methodist "Body" be thinking of, when they authorised them? and what could the learned Doctor, their expositor, be dreaming of, when he put forth, as above, these monstrous propositions? It is actually said that a man may grow in *grace*, that is, in the *favour* of God, *before* he has obtained *acceptance* with God; that he may suffer and do the will of God *before* the Holy Spirit is given to him, by which only, however, he can be enabled to know, to suffer, and to do God's will at all; that he receives light from God before God has forgiven him; that he may grow in *grace* while in a state of *condemnation*, or *before* his sins have been *pardoned*; and if it be meant to say, that a man is enabled to suffer and do the will of God *before* he is pardoned or justified, by a *lesser* measure of grace, or of the Holy Spirit, than is afterwards bestowed, it is then implied that God's *best gift* the Holy Spirit, is actually *given*, while pardon, which must in all reason be deemed a lesser gift, is *denied*. It is also im-



plied in the above propositions, that all persons, of *all denominations*, who do not obtain an *inward assurance* of pardon according to Mr. Wesley's definition of justification, although they may spend their whole lives "in suffering and doing the will of God," and in "growing in grace," yet never obtain acceptance with God, and therefore *must* go to hell! It is further said, that men have not their sins expelled and the love of God and man shed abroad in their hearts, *until* they are justified or pardoned, but; *nevertheless*, *previously* to their pardon, they may do the will of God and grow in grace;—in other words, that they may do the will of God without any love to God or man; and grow in grace without a single sin being expelled from their hearts! It is also said, that when a man is pardoned he receives *all love*, and yet that he is not *perfected* in love until, perhaps, a little before death; also, that he is made holy *all at once* when he is pardoned, by all good being given to him, and all evil being expelled, and yet it remains for him afterwards to be "*gradually sanctified*;"—also, that after *all* evil had been expelled *all at once*; and after his devilish mind has been *changed* into the mind of Christ, he is "*gradually to die to sin*;"—also, that he *grows* in grace, which is said to be a *gradual* work of God, *before* he is pardoned, and *after* he is pardoned, and has in consequence received all good, he is *still to grow* in grace! And these monstrous contradictions are forced upon the unwilling and superficial by the question, "*May not God do what he will with his own?*" And what is still more wonderful, this question is propounded by an uncompromising antagonist of Calvinism. It further appears that, agreeably to this convenient question, the just and merciful God may be *so unjust and merciless* as to withhold pardon from a Methodist who suffers and does his will, and receives light, and grows in grace, all through a life of threescore years and more, *pining all the while* for a *sense* of pardon, and a *sense* of the gift of love and of the Spirit, and a *sense* of the expulsion of all sin and of every evil temper, all which are included, it is said, in justification or pardon, and which pardon cannot be had without a sense of the things included in it, while a scamp at the foot of the gallows, according to the united testimony of all Methodists, gets justification with-

out having previously done any thing but commit iniquity with greediness! Evidently, then, Wesleyanism is Calvinism in disguise! But how is it to be accounted for that so shrewd a man as Mr. Wesley should run into such inconsistencies? I would not wish to be uncharitable, but I think I have it, said Job. When Mr. Wesley began his extravagant operations, he put forth a new and striking idea (for if he had not done so, who would have paid any attention to him more than to others?) and that idea was, that no man can receive forgiveness of sins *without knowing it*; and he that does not *feel*, therefore, a sense, or assurance of forgiveness, *has not been forgiven!* This new notion naturally attracted to him such persons chiefly as possessed an enthusiastic temperament, and who were naturally of a warm and excitable character; and these found no difficulty in producing in themselves the desired sensations, or calling them forth at *will*. But with these also came others, of calmer judgment, and of an honester and better order of mind; persons who were not adepts at self-deception, and who not being able to get "assurance," fell into grievous states of despair, even almost to madness. Mr. Wesley probably saw, that if some comfort were not provided for this more humble and sincere portion of his converts, they would fall off; and so, to comfort and encourage them under their suffering from the absence of justification, and to keep them still in connexion with methodism, they were informed, that *it did not follow* from their not obtaining justification, that they were *decidedly* lost, for God *most usually* gives light to *unpardoned* sinners, and also helps them to "grow in grace," and "to suffer, and to do his will" *before he pardons them?* Thus Mr. Wesley contrived to be "*all things to all men,*" by fitting his doctrine to all temperaments, and to all characters, which may partly account for the great numbers who have enlisted under his banner. He contrived to put the pardoned and the unpardoned, in a measure, on a level, that he might secure all. He bound to him the pardoned, that is, the "saints," by the evidence he had caused them *to create in themselves* of forgiveness; and the unpardoned, that is, the "sinners," he made "prisoners of hope" by constantly holding out to them the hope of assurance being

obtained *sooner or later*; and if they could not get it until even just before death, he converted the withholding of pardon into a trial of their faith, *for may not God do what he will with his own*? And to silence all allegations of contradiction, he transferred the contradictions he had invented to his God, by asserting that God conducts his saving operations in the most contradictory, capricious, and arbitrary manner, so that there is nothing like consistency of judgment, or principle, in the divine wisdom; from all which it might be concluded, that the Immutable is distinguished by nothing so much as by his mutability! But what can be the cause, thought Job, that *the leaders* of "the Body" are so deficient in sound reason and understanding as to adopt and persist in such gross contradictions? Is it because they study popular eloquence more than the principles which should regulate an honest and upright judgment, and while studying to confound others, get confounded themselves? What are "the Body" of the laity about in sanctioning such absurdities? Is it possible that they ever really and consecutively think? Have they ever learned to reason, or to use their judgment *legitimately*? Or are they like blind horses, led about at the will of those who put out their eyes, in order to keep them in subjection? Have they suffered their understandings to be so dazzled and blinded by the meretricious arts of popular eloquence, as to have lost the power of distinguishing between consistency and inconsistency? Possibly, however, the leaders and "the Body" are disposed to *relax the original doctrine* of assurance, and to leave it in some degree of uncertainty and doubt, in order to conciliate those sects which do not receive it, and thus to assume a face of liberality by saying to them, "Although *you* have not got justification (for if you had you would *know* it), we do not deny that you are 'enlightened,' and are 'growing in grace,' and although God has not *accepted* you as yet, we doubt not you are *growing in his favour* (!) and that he will *pardon you at last*, when he has made you *fit to be pardoned* by growing in grace long enough. We acknowledge you to be *good* Christians, although, being without pardon, and therefore, as yet, in a state of condemnation, God has not yet shed abroad his love in your hearts, producing love to all man-

kind ; as yet He has given you light only, bringing you out of spiritual darkness, but leaving you in spiritual death." —But is not this a sad paltering with principle, uprightness, and sincerity? When Job saw so many humble-minded, upright, worthy persons bowed down and afflicted because they could not get that assurance without which they fancied themselves unaccepted of God ; and when, on the other hand, he saw so many self-confident, censorious, narrow-minded, bigoted people transmuted *by themselves* into saints, by obtaining a self-created assurance of justification by means of self-excitement, aided by the excitement of *kindred minds* at prayer meetings, and revival meetings,—and in whom, notwithstanding their self-asserted claims to saintship, he could perceive no very strong *tittle to moral estimation*,—he was powerfully reminded of the words of the prophet, "*With lies ye have made the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad ; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.*" (Ezek. xiii. 22).

Job perceived also some further contradictions in Mr. Wesley's statements. Mr. Wesley says, "*the moment a sinner believes that Christ died for his sins, God pardons and absolves him.*" *If this BE the case*, said our friend to himself, surely *all* professing Methodists *must be justified*, whether they experience a sensible assurance of it or not ! for certainly they *all* believe that Christ died for their sins, or else they could not be *christians at all*, according to the methodist definition of christianity ! This belief, then, common to *all* Methodists, Mr. Wesley says, makes faith to have, *instantaneously and of necessity*, a justifying efficacy, and yet Methodists are taught to believe, at the same time, that they may have this faith for fifty years together, and not obtain that *sense* of pardon which they nevertheless believe to be co-existent, and indeed identical, with pardon itself ! How can any methodist disbeliever in *insensible* justification affirm with "*the Body,*" that *at the very moment* a man *believes* his sins to be forgiven, he *feels* that they are forgiven, and thus obtains *sensible* justification or pardon, *while he himself cannot feel* his sins forgiven, although he has *no doubt* that Christ died for *his* sins?

While then he himself believes *this* without the shadow of a doubt, why has he to wait for *his own* justification to an uncertain, and perhaps a very distant period? *How can he hold such contradictory ideas at the same time?* How can he believe pardon may be easily and instantly obtained by means of the *belief* which he already possesses, and yet that it cannot be obtained but with the utmost difficulty, or until perhaps a very remote period? How can he believe that that which is true as regards *all*, can be untrue as regards *each*? or that that which is true in reference to *others*, is untrue as regards *himself*? How can a man really have "received light," and be in a state of grace, as Mr. Wesley declares, without his "light" enabling him to see clearly so as to embrace that justifying faith which always procures pardon immediately, and that pardon always sensibly manifested? Compare the two statements made by Mr. Wesley, and authorized by "the Body," as follows:

First, "the moment a sinner believes Christ died for his sins, God pardons him." And,

Second, "God usually gives a considerable time for men to receive light and to grow in grace [after this is believed] before they are justified or pardoned."

Were ever statements more diametrically opposed?

Which of the two following statements of Mr. Wesley is false? *for one of the two must be so.*

1. "You are justified the moment you believe"? or,
2. "You are not justified, notwithstanding that you believe; until you *feel* that you are pardoned, and this you may have to wait for a long time."

Mr. Wesley represents justification as being accompanied with a witness of the Holy Spirit: he says, "It is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses that all my sins are blotted out." "This testimony of the Spirit *must precede* the love of God, and ALL holiness." Surely this is very sorry comfort for those who have been suffering and doing the will of God, and receiving light and growing in grace through a long life, but who have never experienced justification! seeing that they are, nevertheless, and after all, entirely void of the love of God, and *all* holiness! In other words, they have

been growing in the favour of God, notwithstanding that all the while they were, and still are, "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity!"

Again ; Mr. Wesley says, "The fact [of the witness of the Spirit to our justification] *we know* ; namely, that the Spirit of God *does* give a believer a *testimony* of his adoption." "The Spirit shineth upon his own work, and clearly shews what he has wrought." So that, according to this much "venerated" leader, every one who *has not a sense* of his adoption and pardon, *has no good in him whatever* ; but he has this comfort, that although he is void of good, and therefore utterly worthless, he is *growing in grace*. He can have no good in him if he has not a *sense* of his adoption, because a *real* adoption, it is said, is always accompanied with a *sense* of the love of God being then shed abroad in the heart, producing love to man, and expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honour, of money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper, and changing the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into "the mind which was in Christ Jesus!"

Job was determined to put to the proof this doctrine of assurance, by bringing it to the test of his own personal experience. "If," said he, "I find those who say they have obtained a sense of pardon and adoption, and have been freed from all sins and vices, and every evil temper, exhibit '*the mind which was in Christ Jesus*,' I shall then know that this assurance is a reality ; but if I find the reverse, I shall then know that it is merely a phantasy." He then proceeded to observe the character of the Methodists who came under his observation. One of the self-called "*adopted*" he found to be a sordid lover of the world ; another, a lover of worldly pleasure in its more *secret* forms, the pleasures of the eye, or the taste, and sometimes of a grosser kind ; another he found to be idle, a lover of ease, one who would not stir hand or foot to do a good turn ; another, a lover of honour, distinction, and influence, in a small way ; another, exceedingly greedy of money, but always within the limits of the civil law ; another, proud of himself because he was himself, or because of his fancied sanctity or ability, all which he covered as well as he could with some ill-put-

together shreds of apparent humility ; another was an angry man, but not in the form of outward violence, for although he soon took offence, he did not openly show it, because that was not allowed in a justified person, but he hated most cordially all those who counteracted his wishes, and especially all those of rival religious persuasions ; another was a most obstinate specimen of self-will, a person never known to change his opinion or determination, or to pay the least attention to evidence when it contradicted his own views ; others, he found given to various evil tempers. If, then, said Job, I am to go by the rule, "*By their fruits ye shall know them*," I should say that the methodist doctrine of "assurance, justification, and adoption" is a mere phantasy ; and if, here on earth, the sensibly justified are higher in esteem amongst methodists, than those who are *not* sensibly justified, I am strongly inclined to believe, judging from the greater exhibition of humility, integrity, sincerity, kindness, disinterestedness and purity, in those who "cannot get justification," that, in the other world, *generally speaking*, they will change places, and the first will be last, and the last first. I do not mean to say that those who say they are justified have not had certain sensations or persuasions ; I do not mean to say that they utter what they do not believe, or what they know to be false, when they say that they have been born again into perfect innocence, and have been gifted in an instant with all the graces and moral beauties of an angelic nature ; but the evidence of their own conduct and behaviour proves that they have been deluded ; and that their sensations, which they call the witness of the Spirit, are not of divine origin, but are the cheat of a corrupt nature, or of the powers of darkness.

And only let a reasonable man ask himself, whether this alleged instantaneous gift of all good, and expulsion of all evil,—this instantaneous change of a devilish mind into the very mind which was in the Lord Himself,—is at all credible ? Is not man's nature essentially progressive ? Was there ever a man in existence whose conduct and demeanour before justification were earthly, sensual, and devilish, and who, immediately after it, became the perfect model of the mind of Jesus Christ ? I feel quite certain, said Job, that such a man was never yet seen ; and I feel equally

certain, that if the minds of "the body of Methodists" had not been *very singularly constituted*, they would have withheld their sanction from the extravagant statements of their founder, until they had ascertained how far they were capable of being established by the evidence of facts. All my experience goes to prove that such sudden changes are no more possible in a progressive nature, than it is possible for rain to fall down from the sun! Besides, all the parabolical or *figurative* Scripture comparisons of natural things to the establishment of the kingdom of God in us, involve a gradual progression.\* All the exhortations of the Saviour clearly indicate the necessity of continued effort and labour. Paul is very express in his declarations that he did not stop to count his attainments, but pressed forward in the hope of reaching the mark, and obtaining the prize (Phil. iii). Mr. Wesley has, in his description of the accompaniments of justification, defied all the conclusions of every system of moral philosophy, founded on experience and observation, and as if he were seized with an eagerness to entrap his followers into an adherence to him by means of a most pleasant, but infatuating delusion, he has, in order to establish it, trampled on all sound knowledge, both human and divine, in relation to the nature of God, and the nature of man. And yet, what vast multitudes of men have become methodists! And this suggests another idea. What vast multitudes of men, many of them, no doubt, well-intentioned, are incapable of thinking consecutively; of

\* In opposition to this statement, it may perhaps be suggested, that as a natural birth is *one act*, which in idea excludes progression, so must be the "new birth;" but, on reflection, it will be seen that as, properly speaking, the generation of a *man* commences with his conception, and is not finished until he has attained his maturity of growth and physical power, so also is the case with the *regeneration*, or the new and spiritual creation of a man; it will be seen that the "new birth" makes only a distinct stage of "regeneration," just as natural birth is a distinct stage in the natural generation of a *man*; a child (*not a man*) is *then* generated, which is afterwards to grow into a man. But, in common language, "birth" is generally used for "generation," both in a natural and spiritual sense; in both cases, therefore, the idea entertained should be that of progression, and not that of a single act.



examining evidence accurately; of seeking evidence impartially; and of forming a calm, deliberate, and just judgment, according to the best evidence they can attain! These multitudes have not even found out that the definition of being justified, given by Mr. Wesley, is palpably contrary to Scripture. How can "justified" mean "pardoned" or "having sins forgiven," and being "accepted of God," and "adopted," when it is said of the Lord Jesus, that "HE, *who was manifest in the flesh*, WAS JUSTIFIED *in the Spirit*," (1 Tim. iii. 16.) Was Jesus pardoned? Had He his sins forgiven? Was He adopted?

Our friend became *afterwards* quite satisfied, that "justified" signifies *made just*, as "sanctified" signifies *made holy*; and that when Jesus said he would "*sanctify Himself*," and the Apostle said "*he was justified*," and also "*made perfect*, through suffering," all these declarations go to prove the truth of what the Apostle declared, that Jesus "*was made of the seed of Abraham as to the flesh*," and "*made in all points like unto his brethren*," and "*was tempted in all points as we are*."

In respect to the apostolic declaration that Jesus "*was justified*" when He was in the flesh, our friend saw clearly in the light of the New Church doctrine, that as Jesus was God "*manifested in the flesh*" so he *must*, as the necessary consequence of his being "*made flesh*," REQUIRE to be "JUSTIFIED," or "*made righteousness*," (1 Cor. i. 30; vi. 11) "*in*," or rather "*by the Spirit*," which dwelt in Him without measure (John iii. 34). He saw that as Jesus was "*made of a woman*," (for her being a virgin made no difference) he must necessarily have inherited from *her* as a *fallen creature*, like to all other women, an infirm nature; he saw that without *such* a nature, Jesus could not possibly have been tempted, for there would have been nothing in Him capable of being called into activity by the tempter, so as to constitute a *real* temptation; neither could He, if He had inherited *no* infirmity from the mother, have needed to be "*justified*," "*sanctified*," or "*perfected*." But although he was justified, since he had never yielded to temptation, and consequently was "*without sin*," he could not need to be *justified* in the sense of being *pardoned*, which, however, he must have needed, if the Methodists

are right in affirming that "justified" means *pardoned*, *accepted*, and *adopted*. But was Jesus a sinner? Was he ever otherwise than accepted of God? Was it compatible with the "Only Begotten" to become the *adopted* Son of God? In saying that "justified" means "pardoned," the Methodists declare that Jesus was a sinner,—that he had actual guilt! O fie upon the whole "body" of Methodists, exclaimed Job, and all their learned, but too superficial commentators!

And *why* do the Methodists say, observed our friend, that justification is an *instantaneous* operation of the Spirit, but sanctification a *gradual* one? How can a man be made just without *so far* being made holy? or be made holy without *so far* being made just? Truly justification commences when a man is *not only forgiven*, but actively co-operates with the Divine Operation against sin, for then the inward work of purification begins, which is to be afterwards gradually carried on, and which is described in Scripture by various terms, as purified, regenerated, born again, renewed, washed, justified, and sanctified.

Job was much puzzled to account for the bitter hostility shown by Methodists and other solidian zealots against the Roman Catholic religion, and particularly on account of the Romish doctrine of confession and absolution. Our friend was not to be deceived by mere professions and appearances. He loved to view things as they are in themselves, and, especially, as they are seen in their consequences. Job remarked to himself, What is the difference, really and essentially, between these two cases: a Catholic priest says, "Come; confess your sins *specifically* to me, and I, by the authority committed to me, will absolve you from them, should it appear to me that you are sufficiently penitent." A Methodist preacher says, "Come; confess your *habitual* sinfulness to God, believing that Christ was punished for all your sins; and I am authorised, as 'an ambassador for Christ,' to declare that all your sins will then be instantly forgiven?" And after well considering the two cases, Job could see no difference *in their tendency* to lead men to trust their salvation to the mere *ipse dixit* of others, in preference to an humble and faithful perseverance

in "the whole duty of man," by fearing God, and keeping his commandments. So much alike did the bribe of the Catholic, and the bribe of the Methodist, appear to Job, that he could not discern any essential difference between them. If one had a bad tendency, so he thought, and for the same reason, had the other. Both equally confounded forgiveness and salvation. But, in one important particular, the Catholic appeared to possess advantage over the Wesleyan, because he requires a *specific* confession of sin, *which implies self-knowledge arising from self-examination* and a consequent *definite* condemnation of the sin discovered; while the Wesleyan is content with a *merely general* confession of sinfulness, without any advertence of the mind to any *express* commission of sin, and thus without any attainment of self-knowledge. Job saw that a confession of *specific* sins (although made through a priest to God instead of being made direct to Him,) is much more likely to lead to self-knowledge, and subsequent humiliation and amendment, than a general confession of sin in the gross, without any *definite* self-condemnation or, perhaps, even without any knowledge of any one particular sinful act that has been committed. And since the Catholic and the Methodist equally confound forgiveness with salvation, he could not see that the more open and direct absolution of the Catholic is at all more likely to encourage men to run into sin *because of the facility of obtaining pardon*, than the thinly disguised, but virtual absolution of the solifidian preacher. He saw that pardon, that is, salvation (!) is to the full *as easily obtained*, and with much less sacrifice, from the Methodist preachers, by those who believe their assertions, as it is from the Romish priest by the confiding Catholic. The solifidian protestant, indeed, after he has once confirmed himself in justification or pardon by faith alone, *can* run into sin when he pleases, *and then proceed to absolve himself*, by persuading himself that God will, *of course*, forgive his sin, because Christ was actually punished for it by anticipation! This is, beyond question, the practical operation of the out and out belief of the doctrine of salvation by faith in the merits of Christ. The utmost facility is here given to a succession of *real* sinning, and *unreal* repenting, until life is brought

to a conclusion without any real preparation for the high and holy activities of heaven ; or, at best, for any higher and holier occupation than that of being *eternally occupied in singing* ! Truly a life of faith *only*, accompanied with the excitement of much singing and long praying, while upon earth, is a fit and suitable preparation enough for *such* a heaven as this, and for *such* a heaven *only* ! But it requires an habitual holy direction of the *active* powers and *affections* into the various channels of *genuine* righteousness, to prepare for *that* heaven, where all find their delight in being ministering spirits, ministering to the fulfilment of the purposes of Divine Love,—to the holy purposes of that God who is Love Itself, and Mercy Itself !

In regard to the idea generally entertained that Christ was punished for the sins *to be committed after his crucifixion*, Job saw no authority for this in the Scriptures, even admitting the popular construction of them ; he saw that the doctrine and preaching of the Apostles was this, that, by the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, there was obtained "*remission for the sins that were then past*" (Rom. iii. 25 ; Heb. ix. 15) ; or, in other words, as he subsequently understood, that all the sad consequences which had been entailed on mankind by past sinfulness might now be removed ; a figurative propitiation (figurative, because a *literal* one would imply an *impossible* change in the Divine nature) had been provided, so that the whole human race, before "*afar off*" from God, might now be brought nigh ; hereditary evil, the sad consequence of "*past sins*," and which formed the kingdom of Satan in the soul by natural birth, and which separated from God, might now be removed by a spiritual or new birth, and be superseded by the establishment of "*the kingdom of God*" in its place. And this is precisely the preaching of Jesus Christ himself, and also his Apostles. "*The kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye, and believe the good tidings*" (Mark i. 15). Thus it appears that there is no *direct* connexion between our *individual* sins, and the provided "*propitiation*" by which came the "*remission of sins past*," or previous to the Christian era. All that we have to do is, *to repent*, that is, to amend our lives, by shunning all evils as sins

against God ; and *to believe* the good tidings, that our Divine Saviour will gradually set up his kingdom in our souls, if we “*seek in the first place the kingdom of God and his righteousness.*” It was by his perfect righteousness, Job subsequently saw, that the Lord removed hereditary evil from his own Humanity, and thus provided for the removal of ours, by his Spirit proceeding from his Humanity after it was glorified. Before hereditary evil, (from the mother, in the Lord’s case,) was removed in, his person, hell had power therein, and thereby over the whole human race ; but when it was removed, by the Lord’s enduring and overcoming in temptations, hell was removed from exercising domination over man generally, and thus God, *through the medium of his own sanctified Humanity*, drew near to man, and protected him from the powers of darkness ; or, figuratively speaking, became propitious. If God, that is, if Jesus had not thus redeemed mankind from hell, hereditary evils, the result of “*past sins,*” would have rendered man universally the helpless slave of the powers of darkness ; but in consequence of redemption having been thus effected, man cannot now be held in bondage, *except with his own consent* ; or, to pursue the figure, God is always propitious *to us*, and waiting to be gracious, and only requires that we “*repent and believe.*” We have no occasion to connect the blood-shedding on the cross with *our individual sins* ; that sad event was undoubtedly necessary, as a temptation in which hell was to be finally overcome, and thus it was the necessary means of procuring the “*remission of sins that were past,*” or in other words, of averting the consequences of hereditary evil. This is to be believed with heartfelt gratitude, but the mere belief of it will never procure salvation from sin. OUR especial belief must be this,—that God our Saviour is all that *to us*, which the New Testament reveals ; and we must be all that *to Him*, which both Testaments require, in order that we may be saved from our sins, and be restored to his image and likeness, and thus to a capacity for heavenly happiness ; and that our regeneration and sanctification will be effected, precisely in proportion as we forsake sin, and keep the divine commandments.

The faith to which such great results are promised in

the New Testament, Job saw clearly, is not a speculative, but a practical belief. "*He that believeth in me,*" said our blessed Lord, "*hath everlasting life.*" But obviously the Lord did not mean to hold out this promise to the partial, but to the *total* believer; that is, to him who accepts the Redeemer in *all* the relations in which he presents Himself, *according to the best of his knowledge*; and who accepts Him, not with the powers of his understanding only, but also with *all* the powers of his will, and thus with all his powers of affection and action, or with *all* the powers of his soul and body united. Thus understanding that believing in the Lord means *accepting him in all his relations*, especially as our Saviour, our Shepherd, our King, our Master or Teacher, our Comforter and Sanctifier, and the author of our happiness and joy, it is plain that the Lord cannot fill these relations to us individually, unless we allow Him to do so, by entering into a corresponding relation with Him, *by submitting ourselves*, with full purpose of heart, *for the future*, to be saved by Him from our sins; to be led to the pastures of his Word; to be governed by the laws of his kingdom; to be instructed in his truth; to be supported, comforted, enlightened, and sanctified by his Spirit; and to seek our chief happiness and joy in Him only. Sincerely thus to determine *for the future*, is "to believe *with the heart* unto righteousness;" it is so to believe in the Lord as to have everlasting life,—the life of Divine Love in our wills, as well as the light of Divine Wisdom in our understandings; and if we faithfully act upon this determination, or carry out this belief to its natural results, the everlasting life promised will obtain increased and increasing possession of us, as we become successively rescued from the opposite principles of spiritual death, and which are the various affections of the love of self and the world. Had the Christian world, said Job, thus rightly interpreted the faith or belief set forth in the Scriptures as procuring the life and Spirit of the Everlasting Lord, faith separate from the affections of charity in the will, and the acts of charity in the life, would never have been regarded as the procuring cause of salvation and eternal happiness. If we believe without fully intending *to study earnestly and constantly what a truly Christian life is, in order that*

*we may truly live it*, we believe with the head only unto unrighteousness, and not "with the heart unto righteousness." The Lord has a right to possess all our powers in every region of our minds; and he will not take possession of one, unless we consent to admit Him to all. It is by a *true* faith, as above described, that He begins to take possession of our whole mind; and it is by a corresponding life, or the carrying out of our original good intention in believing, that his possession in us is continually extended and confirmed.

Our friend was struck with the contrast which he perceived between the idea of repentance, as entertained by Methodists and Baptists; and the idea of the Apostle, where he speaks of "*a godly sorrow which worketh repentance*" (2 Cor. vii. 10). He found that they universally mistake the sorrow which should work repentance for repentance itself! Now it is clear from the Apostle, that the repentance to which the sorrow is to lead can be no other than an actual change of the life and its ruling motives, for repentance cannot be the same thing as the sorrow which leads to it. And as for Mr. Wesley's definition of repentance,—as "a conviction of sin," it makes it to be even something less than "a godly sorrow," for no one can be sorry for sin until after a conviction of it has been obtained. Not that the Methodists are deficient in *outward* signs of sorrow for sin; but Job rightly considered that, according to the common adage, "deep sorrow is seldom loud;" and therefore he judged that there cannot exist any *very deep* sorrow for sin amongst those "professors" generally, because they are so *remarkably loud* in the expression of it! He observed, also, that their confessions of sin, as well as those of the Baptists, are always expressed in merely general terms, and that there is an effort to express the greatness of their sins, by using the strongest epithets they can select, as if they thought God would be *induced* to be merciful to them, in proportion to the degree that they could succeed in finding strong terms to describe their sinfulness. And what most surprised Job was this, that those who pretend to be so well acquainted with their own wicked selves never practise self-examina-

tion at all, by seriously and minutely comparing their characters and conduct with the divine commandments! But, in truth, on their principles, why should they examine themselves, seeing that they "cannot keep the commandments?" And here an idea occurred in distrust of the *sincerity* of such *general* confessions of guilt. How, said our friend to himself, can a man feel himself *really guilty* of sin, on account of his not keeping God's commandments, while he is fully persuaded that he is *not able* to keep them? It appears to me that a servant might *as justly* be deemed guilty of idleness, and with as much propriety might be expected to *feel* himself to be guilty, because he is *unable* to carry the monument on his back to the top of Greenwich hill, when bidden to do so by his master in a fit of insanity! Surely, a man who loudly bemoans his guilt when he really believes himself *not guilty at all*, any more than a wolf is morally guilty of worrying a sheep, must either be a hypocrite, or something very like one! I do not see what is the *use* of confession of sin at all, unless it be preparatory to amendment; but if a man believes amendment, or at least uniform Christian conduct founded on Christian principles, to be impossible, I do not see what motive he can have, either to search out his evils or to resist them. No one is likely to make an attempt to effect an object, while he believes success to be impossible! Our Saviour said, "*Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.*" Ah! he *said* so, cries one; but He *knew* all the while that we cannot be perfect! He only meant to lead us to see and acknowledge our weakness! Nay, says the Methodist, I hold that man may, and must be, perfect and sinless, even upon earth, which sinless state I call a state of sanctification. But does the Methodist practise self-examination? said Job. Very seldom, I fear; and yet I do not see how sins can be got rid of, unless they are *each* of them resisted; and I do not see how this is to be done, unless they are *each* of them discovered; and I do not see how this can be done without self-examination, that is, without a special and particular comparison of ourselves with *each* commandment. "What!" perhaps some zealous solidian may exclaim, "compare ourselves with the commandments! Why, we are not under the law, but



under grace! Are we not delivered from the yoke of the law?" "Practise self-examination, indeed!" another may cry, "Why Christ's righteousness is all sufficient to make up for any 'short-comings' of ours, be they little, or be they much! And besides, what is the use of examining ourselves by the commandments, when we cannot keep them?" But, Job ventured to say to one of this school, "You certainly will be *judged* according to your works;" to which the other at once replied, "If I have faith to save me, works will not condemn me;" and this he called having "a good hope through grace!" Our friend thought it, however, a very *bad ground* of hope to believe that we may take our unmortified evils to the bar of God's judgment! for he could not see how it was possible, either to get rid of them there, or to carry them forward into heaven, however they may be cloaked and covered over by faith, so long as it is written, "*without holiness no man shall see the Lord!*" Of one thing Job felt quite certain, that God can *only* choose those to dwell in his presence, who are *like Himself*: that is, who resemble Him, by following the example of their Saviour, in His pure and loving conduct upon earth. Most certain it is, that faith *alone* cannot make man *like God*, and, therefore, most certain it is, that faith alone cannot save, or give a title to heavenly happiness! And most certain it is, also, that no one can be in error who trusts his salvation, *on the one part*, to his doing the divine will, both in believing and in acting, to the best of his ability; and, *on the other part*, to the divine fulfilment of the express declaration, that Jesus will become "*the Author of eternal salvation* (by the sanctification of the Spirit) *unto all them that obey Him*" (Heb. v. 9). In other words, "by the washing of regeneration," the Saviour will save from their sins all those who forsake them; and he will do so *because* they forsake them *at his bidding*. Was ever any thing invented by human perverseness more palpably inconsistent than this,—that man is saved because he performs the Divine will in believing, but not because he performs the Divine Will in obeying? as if any one part of the Divine Will could be more sacred and saving than another part! Did not the same God command us to believe and to obey? And did not the Lord Himself expressly declare, that to believe *only* will *not* save, but to obey will *save*

(Matt. vii. 21)? for obedience necessarily includes a belief in Him who is obeyed. Really Christians seem to think that God is better pleased with the obedience of words, than with the obedience of deeds!

And no wonder that the idea commonly entertained concerning repentance is not the idea of the Apostle, while the repentance described and demanded by the prophet is declared to be impossible! No one can contradict the prophets concerning the obligations of the moral law, without differing from the Apostles. Ezekiel says, "*If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die: all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live,*" (ch. xviii. 21, 22). I perceive, said Job, that three propositions are here clearly presented:

1st, That man *can* keep (of course, by divine aid) ALL God's statutes; and,

2ndly, That man's return to righteousness is the only real repentance, and that it places him in the same situation in relation to God, as if he had always maintained un-sinful obedience; and,

3rdly, That no other condition is required in order to salvation, but the actual repentance here described, and which necessarily pre-supposes a faith in Him whose will is regarded in the act of repenting.

It is further declared, that "*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth therein; for his iniquity that he hath done, shall he die*" (v. 26).

Clearly then, according to the *Old Testament*, and consequently according to the *New*, (for the Unchangeable Author of both *must* be consistent with Himself,) *salvation comes by obedience*, and not by faith only; and condemnation comes by iniquity, and not by the disbelief of the strange doctrine, that God *punished the innocent for the guilty*. I know that some will say thus: "Undoubtedly under the Old dispensation the case was as stated by Ezekiel, but such is not the case under the Gospel!" But is it pos-

sible, I ask, that *more* was required from the "stiff-necked" Israelite, than is required from the highly favored Christian, who possesses such peculiar helps and inducements to keep "*all*" God's commandments? Is it possible that God found Himself mistaken, in requiring *more obedience* from the Israelite than he could yield, and therefore that he corrected his mistake in the New Testament, by requiring *nothing but faith* as a title to eternal happiness? Certainly, according to the Baptist "Confession," man must entirely have lost the power of doing that work of repentance which God required by Ezekiel! and, agreeably to this notion, it is said in article 15, that "God now treats with men on a NEW foundation," which supposes that an amazing *change* has taken place in the mind and conduct of the *Immutable* God! In art. 9, The Confession says, "That the moral law requires all men to love God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; and to love their neighbour as themselves;" and further, "that all men are transgressors of it, and are hereby exposed to condemnation, *from which they cannot recover themselves by any duties they are capable of performing.*" Here, said Job, is a flat denial of the truth of the Word of the Lord by his prophet Ezekiel,—an awful contradiction of Almighty God to his face!! The Baptists here declare in effect that the prophet talks nonsense! for that no man CAN recover from a state of condemnation, by "*doing that which is lawful and right*;" and that no man has the power, by *actual* repentance of "*saving his soul alive*:" and further, that it is all a delusion to suppose that God *will keep his word*, and *not mention* to the reformed sinner his former transgressions; for if a man should turn "from all his sins that he hath committed," God will still bring against him his past sins, until he believes, *whether he can believe it or not*, that "God the Son," was punished for them! The fact is, says the Baptist, Ezekiel is not worthy of credit, for no one *can* recover himself from a state of condemnation by a return to his duty! But can the Baptists really mean to say, that *less* is required of Christians than was required of the Israelites? If they do, let them remember the words of their Saviour, "*I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets,*" and how he proceeded immediately to declare, that so far from

relaxing the old law, He, as the Divine Legislator, *added thereto, rendering it more strict than it was before.* (See Matt. v. 17, 21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 43, 44). Let them not presume to say, then, that the prophet Ezekiel is destroyed by the Gospel. Truly they ought to blush for their ignorance of the "*Gospel of the kingdom of God,*" which they have superseded by a so-called "*gospel*" of human invention, to the propagation of which all their energies are directed. They do not see that the Gospel is called a *New Covenant*—not because it provides a method of doing without obedience to the moral law, but because, as the blessed consequence of the union of the Divine and Human Nature *in the fulness of time*, it gives *new* and purer commandments, which call for the exercise of *new* and greater self-denial; and likewise affords to man now placed in a *new* state of spiritual power, *new* revelations of heavenly things; and holds out the promise of *new* helps, to enable him to yield all that is required. "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you*" (John xiii. 34). And surely such a high and glorious standard and example of love was never before given to man! That the *New Covenant* is in perfect agreement with the law and the prophets, and especially with the above passage of the prophecy of Ezekiel which the Baptists so boldly repudiate, appears from the following declarations of Jesus Christ: "*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.*" "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*" "*This do, and thou shalt live.*" I see, said Job, that on the subject of repentance, Jesus Christ, the Prophets, and the Apostles, are completely at issue with the Baptists, and as a Christian, I cannot hesitate as to which it is my duty to follow. However, if they believe the declaration of Peter (1 Ep. i. 10, 11), as they say they do, that the Son, as the Eternal Word, spake by the prophets, and consequently by Ezekiel, and that he afterwards contradicted *in person*, what He had before declared by the inspiration of his Spirit, and if, as I have already seen, they believe the words of Jesus Christ Himself, *only so far as he speaks conformably to their creed*, I know not where to find an authority to refer to, which they will consider as

binding; for they will not hesitate to turn aside any declaration of their Saviour about keeping the commandments, by saying, "Ah! He does not mean so; faith is all-sufficient!"

It is, indeed, no wonder, thought Job, that the Scripture declarations, that man shall be dealt with hereafter *according to his works*, have fallen into disregard, while the doctrine has become so generally prevalent, that no man can keep the commandments. As it would be obviously unjust in the extreme, to condemn men for breaking laws which they cannot observe, no wonder it is coolly concluded *that God has altered his mind*, and will not now, as he once said he would, judge men *according to their works*, but according to their faith! And although this supposed change somewhat derogates from the divine immutability; although it makes God's wisdom to appear too much like man's fluctuating judgment; although it supposes God to have made a law so unsuitable to the condition of human nature as that it required to be altered, and indeed reversed; yet *even all this is better* than to suppose that God is so void of mercy, or even of common justice, as to punish men for breaking laws, which He knew beforehand they could not possibly observe! It is quite an improvement upon this to imagine, that He has provided faith as a way of escape from his own impracticable commandments, and their dreadful consequences! But no one can seriously read the Scriptures without seeing that this supposed way of escape is all a fiction; and that the declaration of Ezekiel, that whosoever DIETH IN INIQUITY, "*for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die*," applies to every one, whatever his faith may be, who repents not, by freely and actually shunning all evils as sins against God, BEFORE he is laid on his death-bed. All who *thus* repent, come under Ezekiel's description of those who keep the commandments and live; but to all others the Scripture holds out no hope of eternal happiness. The faith is of no avail which is unaccompanied with an *actual* observance of the commandments. Most truly and emphatically does Paul say, "*Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the DOERS of the law shall be justified.*" And this is said in *the same* chapter (Rom. ii.)

which solemnly declares, that, "*At the day of the righteous judgment of God He will render to EVERY man ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS ; to them who seek for and immortality BY PATIENT CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING, eternal life ; but unto them who DO NOT OBEY THE TRUTH, tribulation and anguish, even unto every soul of man that DOETH EVIL ; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that WORKETH GOOD.*" Have the Evangelicals altogether forgotten the words of the Lord Jesus, "*Ye are my friends IF YE DO whatsoever I command you ?*" And do not these words imply the converse, "*Ye are mine enemies, if ye DO NOT whatsoever I command you ?*" And under which predicament will those come who have paid no regard to the awful admonition of the prophet, "*prepare to meet thy God !*" until the pains of death are upon them ? Will the Lord's friends and enemies be dealt with alike ? Is the parable concerning those who build their house on the rock, and those who build it on the sand, to be treated in practice as if it were no more than an idle tale ? "*Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and DOETH THEM, I will liken unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock ; and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, AND DOETH THEM NOT, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand*" (Matt. vii.). To which of these characters is the man to be likened who believes that it is impossible to do the Lord's sayings ? Does he build upon the rock, or upon the sand ? The fruitfulness of the seed depends upon the quality of the ground in which it is sown : on what kind of ground, then, does the seed fall in the case of the wicked man on his death-bed ? Has he the "*good ground of an honest and good heart, which having heard the Word, keeps it, and brings forth fruit with patience ?*" (Luke viii. 16.) And truly this is the only ground in which the seed of the Word can become fruitful ! But is it, after all, a matter of no moment whether the seed becomes fruitful or not ? Is the parable of the sower also an idle tale ? Are the fruitful and unfruitful hearers, after all, in the same situation, and equally possessors of the same hope ? Peter says that those who are saved "have purified their souls in obeying

*the truth.*" can, then, the soul be purified *without* obeying the truth? Have John's words no meaning, that every man who hath a well-founded hope, *purifieth himself as God is pure?* (1 John iii. 3.) Truly the preachers of the Evangelicals appear to have one rule for the living, and another for the dying! They will re-iterate the words of the Lord and his apostles to the living, as if they were immutable truth; they will insist that every soul present must do the Lord's sayings, and become fruitful in works of repentance and faith; but if one of their unfruitful hearers becomes dangerously ill, immediately they proceed to *relax* the before declared immutable law! Hitherto they preached that repentance and the actual forsaking of sin *must* accompany faith; but now they affirm, that *faith by itself* is all that is necessary to save the soul of one who has been all his life building his house upon the sand, and receiving the seed of the Word amongst thorns, or in stony places, or on the hard way-side! And how is it that, while so many hear from the preacher that they *must* prove the sincerity of their faith by doing all the Lord's sayings, they hear it without being at all practically affected by it? The answer is plain. It is because they cannot help remembering, that the preacher himself believes all the while that they *cannot do* what, nevertheless, he says they *must* do; nor can they forget, that he also believes, that at *any* future time, faith alone, the exercise of a mere mental act of faith, will be sufficient to set all straight! With such thoughts in the back ground, it is in vain that the preacher thunders in their ears, "*Now is the appointed time! Now is the day of salvation! Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts!*" Ah, says the unfaithful hearer, that only applies to those who *have not faith*; I have faith; and that is enough for me; faith will justify me without the deeds of the law, for, says the apostle, "*A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*" (Rom. iii). But I see clearly, said Job, that the Apostle here meant by "the deeds of the law" the deeds of the *ceremonial*, and not of the moral law; and that by "faith," he means the whole Gospel believed and obeyed; for he contrasts the "law of works" with the "law of faith," and it is

quite plain to me, that by the law of works he means the ceremonial law of Moses; and by the law of faith, the moral law, as confirmed by the Lord Himself in the Gospel, and by the doing of which believers are to be justified. This, also, is said expressly by James; (ch. ii.) "*By works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*" The Scripture ought not to be so construed as to make one Apostle contradict another, seeing that each spake by one and the same Spirit.

And how very pointed are the words of John, concerning the absolute necessity of keeping the commandments: "*Hereby, says that apostle, we know that we do know the Lord Jesus, if we keep his commandments; he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him!*" Again: "*By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous*" (1 John ii. 3, 4; v. 2, 3). If the commandments of God are not grievous, how can they be truly regarded as impossible to be observed? Commands that task our utmost strength are grievous enough, but what must those be which are impracticable? How can it be the peculiar privilege of the Gospel, to relieve us from keeping the *whole* law, when both Testaments unite in representing the *entire* observance of it, as man's highest glory and happiness? How dare Baptists and Methodists go about deceiving ignorant and credulous people, by flattering those who love evil ways, that they may nevertheless be saved by faith, because they *cannot* keep the commandments, for this *has all the effect* of telling them that *they need not even try to keep them*,—beyond what decency requires! In every page, indeed, of the Bible, commands are addressed to mankind *as if* they could keep them. Why, then, should God address his creatures as if they could do, what He, nevertheless, knows they cannot do? What can be the meaning in the Psalms of *delighting greatly in God's commandments*? Were the descendants of Abraham holier than Christians? In thus putting forth the pestilential doctrine that we cannot keep the commandments, men appear to wish to excuse their own sins by accusing God of injustice, in



laying upon them obligations which he knows they cannot perform! And well may the insulted SUPREME say to them in reply, as He said of old, "*Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?*" It is amazing that any persons, called Christians, should presume to say that we cannot keep the commandments, in the face of the gracious and express declaration, that "*all things are possible to him that believeth:*" and that, although it is impossible for a rich man of his own power to escape the snare of riches, so as to enter the kingdom of God, yet "*with God as his help and strength it is possible,*" for "*with God all things are possible.*"

Supposing that we cannot keep the commandments, the Divine threatenings against sinners, awful as they are in sound, become actually impotent and unnecessary, and even contemptible and ridiculous! They become, like the oft repeated, and never executed threat of the foolish, fond parent, which the little rebel only laughs at! And as for God's lamentations over sinners, emphatic and tender as they are, considering that they are made merely because men *do not* that which they *cannot do*, and *do* that which they *cannot help* doing, why they really do appear, and become, mere tragic pretences and solemn mockery! Then, again, Why should so much reverence have been required by God to be paid to "*the ark of the covenant,*" merely because it contained *the ten commandments*, if they cannot be kept? Upon this supposition, it would have been quite as reasonable to have required reverence to be paid to the ark, had it contained nothing but some impossible and absurd instruction, such, for instance, as a command to man, to jump from the earth to the moon once a week! But I wonder, thought Job, how it is that while this doctrine is so popular with, and so highly esteemed by, the *individuals* of the religious world without exception, it is so seldom distinctly avowed in the pulpit, or in print? In private, it is dwelt upon with complacency, and even pleasure; individuals administer it to each other as a secret cordial; but ought they not rather to contemplate such a lamentable fact, *if fact it be*, with feelings of shame and humiliation? Why is this notion, while it is so universally circulated in private, so seldom unreservedly put forth in public, as an

incontrovertible doctrine of Christianity? Is it because the clergy and religious teachers know that the whole Bible might be quoted against them? Or is not this the case, that they are apprehensive lest, if they were to avow it openly, such an avowal would derogate from their respectability with men of natural honour and honesty? Are they not afraid, in fact, of bringing a charge upon themselves of holding a doctrine having an immoral tendency? Are they not afraid of the scoffs of the moral sceptic, or the rebukes of moral *unprofessing*, unpretending Christians?

I see this very plainly, that those cling the most strongly to salvation by faith *only*, who are most strongly persuaded that they cannot keep the commandments; and well they may, for if they *cannot* enter into life on the condition laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, by keeping the commandments, it is plain that faith is their only resource. If they thought that they *can* keep the commandments, why then they *must* keep them, and then they could not rely on faith only; so that it appears that a feeling insensibly springs up in the minds of people, that salvation by faith and inability to obey, must stand or fall together. When, therefore, the preacher sets forth the comfortable doctrine of salvation by faith only, he who is disposed to receive it has nothing to do but to quench the risings of conscience against it, for conscience will sometimes plead in favour of the commandments, that God *has so said*; and that he *will judge us as he has said*; that he has threatened *sin* severely, and has promised every good to *obedience*: that he has tenderly lamented over sinners, and rejoiced greatly over the righteous; but to all these pleas the determined solifidian is deaf, and, as the readiest way of ending the mental argument, and silencing conscience, he concludes that *he cannot obey*, and therefore that faith is *his only hope*! I much fear, said Job, that the "*I cannot*" in this case generally means "*I will not*;" for such persons cannot be ignorant of the very numerous and encouraging promises in Scripture, of God's gracious and effectual aid in doing his will. How tenderly does the Apostle express himself to this purpose. "*We do not cease to pray that ye might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and in-*

*creasing in the knowledge of God, STRENGTHENED WITH ALL MIGHT, ACCORDING TO HIS GLORIOUS POWER,"* (Col. i. 10). Do the Baptists and others imagine that the Apostle prayed for what he *knew* to be an impossibility? or have *they discovered* that they are wiser than the Apostle, for that he, poor man, was mistaken in supposing that God *can* give power to man to keep his commandments? However, one thing is certain; if the Apostle was right, they are wrong; and the reader may make his election between the two. And if God does not mock his creatures with false and empty professions, why then it is certain that those persons audaciously insult and blaspheme their Maker, who practically tell him *that his aid is of no use*; or *that he promises what he cannot perform*: or, at any rate, that *they* will not have his help, for it is of no use *to them*,—as they are bent on another course! I am afraid they have no love to what is good, and therefore they are not disposed to *try the power* of God's grace, in seeking "*the righteousness which is of God by faith*," by shunning all evil as sin against Him! No man ever became rich in this world who was prepossessed with the idea that it was impossible for him to become rich; and I am afraid that the surrounding poverty as to real Christian goodness, is very much owing to the paralyzing and stupifying impression, that we cannot keep the commandments. This is the moral pestilence that has desolated all the departments of Protestant society. People cannot be induced even to attempt to do what they are persuaded beforehand is impossible; and still less can they be induced to persevere in it "to the end," even if they attempt it. I fancy that those who *really believe* this notion are well-conducted only from the fear or hope of man, *for how can it be otherwise?* Besides, I have another difficulty: The General Baptists, and also the Methodists, believe that man has free-will in spiritual things: now how can this be true if they cannot keep the commandments? How can man be free to do what he has no power to do? If the evil in him be irresistible, what constitutes his free will? But there seems no end to the contradictions which arise out of this false persuasion. Either man is *not* free, and the General Baptists are Calvinists in reality; or else man is free, and *can* keep the commandments, and they

persuade themselves that they cannot, because they are not disposed to *try to keep them with all their heart and soul!* I have often noticed the warmth and fondness of their feelings towards faith, and their coldness and shyness towards the commandments, exhibited in this way: When any one asks them, What must I do to be saved? They instantly reply with eagerness, in the words of an Apostle, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;*" but I NEVER heard them reply in the words in which Jesus Christ Himself replied to the *very same question*, (Matt. xix. 16, 17,) "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*" And lest there should be any mistake as to what commandments he meant, our Lord then proceeded to recite the ten commandments. Really the feeling of aversion thus exhibited to those holy and blessed commandments which have been given to us by Infinite Goodness, is a very bad sign in a Christian church! Why do not the Baptists give at least as much attention to the Lord's own words, as they give to those of his Apostle?

Our friend could not help noticing, that those who thought least of the commandments, and were most convinced of their inability to keep them, were the most sanctimonious in their looks, and the most solemn in their visage and behaviour, seeming to consider themselves as "the salt of the earth;" this reminded him of what the Scripture says of those who have "*broth of abominable things in their vessels,*"—that is, whose minds have attained the least of that cleanness which can only be obtained by loving and delighting in, as well as doing, the commandments,—it says of such, that they are the first to say to their neighbours by their repulsive behaviour, "*Stand by thyself; come not near to me; for I am holier than thou*" (Isaiah lxxv. 4). On the other hand, in spite of their doctrine of "faith alone saving," those who were most convinced that "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,*" and who therefore sought that holiness by "walking undefiled in the way" of the commandments, appeared the most amiable and humble in their deportment, and the most cheerful in their manners; and, which is of still more consequence, he found that they were the most to be trusted. Hence he saw

clearly, that the very substance of *true* religion is, a practical reverence for the Divine commandments; and hence he learned to distinguish between Partizan creed-christians, and conscientious, practical Bible-christians.

But those who believe that they cannot keep the commandments are, nevertheless, *true children of "the Reformation!"*—a reformation of which it may well be doubted, whether the old blasphemies pulled down by it, or the new blasphemies set up, were the greater! This will appear from the following quotations. Luther says, "Let this be your rule in interpreting the Scriptures:—wherever they command any good work, do you understand that they forbid it; *because you cannot perform it.*"\* But this "Reformer" (!) went still further when he said, "God works the evil in us as well as the good: . . . . the great perfection of faith consists in believing God to be just, although by his own will, He necessarily renders us worthy of damnation, so as to seem to take pleasure in the torments of the miserable."† Having thus put forth a doctrine that man is not only unable to keep the commandments of God, but that God also actually moves him to break them, Luther, that he might not drive men to absolute despair, through the belief that they would, nevertheless, be judged according to their works, furnished them with the following "*comfortable doctrine:*" "A Christian cannot lose his soul *do what he will, unless he refuse to believe*, for no sin can damn him but unbelief (!) God regards not our actions, nor what we may choose to do."‡ Calvin, also, says, "God asks nothing of us but that we believe."§ "God is the author and cause of sin, willing it, suggesting it, co-operating in it, and conducting the corrupt will of man to its commission."|| In the year 1618, the synod of Dort declared, "that the true faithful do not, by the most atrocious crimes, forfeit the grace of adoption, and the state of justification."

And let not the reader suppose that these abominations

\* De Serv. Arbit.

† Opera, tom. 2. fol. 437.

‡ De Captiv. Baby.

§ Cal. in Joan. 6.

|| Instit. passim.

are obsolete. The writer of these pages having perused a sermon published by the late Mr. Vaughan, minister of St. Martin's, Leicester, and bearing the significant title of "GOD THE DOER OF ALL THINGS," was led to enter his church, and he there heard him declare that God both willed and contrived the fall of Adam; and that God's reprobates were as much doing his will, as God's elect. It is in vain to say that Protestants *in general* repudiate these infamous blasphemies and monstrous absurdities, while, *in any form*, they maintain the doctrine of justification by faith ALONE! Whenever that doctrine is *fairly carried out* to its consequences, as it was by *honest* Mr. Vaughan, these abominations must be the result. Whenever the logic of the universities is allowed to penetrate into the divinity schools, from which it is now vigilantly excluded, *this will be seen*, and this doctrine will be regarded as producing an infernal progeny as numerous and as mischievous as the offspring of the "mother of harlots." Those who refuse to trace this doctrine to its legitimate consequences, are, perhaps, the *best disposed* of its abettors, but at the same time they must be regarded, *intellectually speaking*, as the LEAST HONEST.

But to return to our friend Job's experience. There was ONE command, according to the Baptist doctrine, which the Baptists themselves thought *might*, and ought to be kept, probably because it is such a very easy one, and to induce the observance of *this* command, all the Scripture passages which enforce obedience to the Divine commandments generally, were, as our friend saw, diligently brought into array against those who disregard it. Indeed a *doubt* was sometimes expressed in his hearing, whether *even faith in the vicarious atonement* can save any one, so long as he refuses to obey it, after evidence has been offered in its favour by the Baptists! And that supposed command relates to adult baptism by immersion!! a command, in the opinion of the Baptists, (judging from their peculiar urgency and zeal in pressing it,) *although relating only to an outward ceremony*, the most important and soul-saving of all the commandments contained in the Bible!! To some of these zealous sticklers

for a certain mode of performing an outward ceremonial, Job feared that the Lord's rebuke might be applicable: "*Ye pay tithe of mint and aniseed, but have omitted the weightier matters of the law!*"

Job saw that the pernicious principle of undervaluing the commandments, *as the means* of obtaining acceptance with God, and growing in the Divine favour, must needs lead to an undervaluing of them, as the means of gaining the approbation of good men, except when subservient to some sordid interest. Our friend reasoned thus. If a man, *without virtue*, can obtain the favour of his sovereign, he will not think it worth while to cultivate the practice of it diligently, merely to ingratiate himself with his sovereign's footman! and truly there is an infinitely greater distance than this between the favour of God and the favour of man. Evidently then, said he, this baneful principle tends to undermine all virtue, civil as well as religious; for what becomes of the moral character of man, when morality, *practised to please God*, to gain his favour, and *to obtain salvation* and everlasting life, is sneered at by the whole "religious world," with every contortion of visage that implies contempt and hatred? Consistent and upright Christians, who are not solifidians, are nicknamed "workmongers," and are at once condemned to hell, because, at the bidding of their Saviour, they keep the commandments, and do so for the reason he gave them, *in order to enter into life*. Really the moral mischief resulting from this depreciation of moral virtue, is beyond calculation!

And what a strange inconsistency it is, thought our friend, that "faith-alone"-advocates should profess to believe in man's *moral responsibility*, or that all men are accountable for their conduct; and yet at the same time believe that none can keep the commandments! And still stranger is it, that predestinarians should assert man's accountability, while they believe that "*some cannot but practise evil*," because God, not having elected them to salvation, has not given them grace or power to do otherwise! But those of the advocates of salvation by faith

only, who profess to believe in man's free will and accountability, think, although not with good reason, that *they* are free from the inconsistency exhibited by Calvinists. It is a happy circumstance that the number of those is diminishing, who insist that a man who sins *because he cannot help it, is nevertheless accountable* both to God and man, and deserves, and ought, to be punished for sinning! Thank heaven, thought Job, Calvinist's are now becoming somewhat ashamed of their creed, and shuffle away from its consequences by calling themselves "moderate Calvinists," which, however, is a good sign as far as it goes, as it indicates a tendency towards improvement. But if Calvinism be thought synonymous with truth,—and if not, it ought to be abandoned altogether,—moderate Calvinism must mean moderate truth, or *mutilated truth*, and strange it is that learned Independents do not foresee this necessary conclusion.

Job saw clearly, however, that there is no more *real* belief of man's moral responsibility and accountability for his actions to God, amongst the "free-will" believers of salvation by faith *alone*, than there is amongst higher Calvinists; and he used to illustrate his conclusion in this way. Suppose I hire a servant, and I say to him, "I shall hold you strictly responsible for the faithful discharge of your duties, but if you should entirely neglect them, *I will always freely forgive you*, if you will remind me of the death of my only son, and will believe the circumstances connected with it." Now is it not plain that, in such a case, the moral accountability which relates *to conduct*, is completely destroyed, being superseded by another kind of responsibility, that of *opinion*, or *faith*? So it is in the relation of God to man. If a man believes that he will be acquitted or condemned according to his faith, he *cannot* at the same time believe that he retains his *moral* accountability, for even at the moment of death, he can shake it off at once, and escape the responsibility incurred by sins without number, simply by believing certain *alleged* facts or considerations connected with the death of the Son of God! Job saw clearly that for *faith-alone* Christians to pretend to be believers in man's *MORAL* responsibility, is either sheer delusion or hypocrisy.



Job observed that most of his religious friends, whether Baptists or Methodists, made it a matter of importance to be able to name the *exact time* and manner of their conversion, when, as they said, they were born again, had their sins forgiven, and received a sense of God's pardoning love, together with love to Him and his people. All this our friend duly considered, and after examining the matter well, he still could not imagine by what test it could certainly be ascertained that these feelings and persuasions are worthy of being depended upon. When he consulted collateral evidences, he saw that some who had this persuasion of being born again at a particular time, were not *very* exemplary; while others, who had it not, *were* truly humble and practical Christians! It seemed to him to be nothing more than the result of a kind of *self-excitement*, by which sanguine temperaments induce upon themselves a belief of that which they wish to believe. He *could* understand that "*witness of the Spirit*," in a man's conscience, which enables him to know, after serious self-examination, that he is a servant of God, and not merely a "man pleaser," and thus that, in his Christian profession, he is honest and sincere. But when Job put in the one scale the persuasion of being born again at a particular time, and in the other, the test of the Apostle, "*He that is born of God doth not commit sin*," he could not help seeing, that if some of those who had the former persuasion thought that *they* did not commit sin, it must be owing to *their* catalogue of sins being much shorter than *his*: or else owing to their more readily seeing faults in their neighbours than in themselves. Job thought that, in many cases, this persuasion must be either a conceit of self-love, or a cheat of man's spiritual enemy, in order to blind souls. He saw no *practical* value in it, and he determined to depend only upon a rational assurance, that he loved the service of God for its own sake, founded on the witness of his conscience,—that he uniformly and habitually acted *as in the sight of God*, and not as in the sight of man. It was with much reluctance that Job came to the conclusion, that this persuasion of a sensible change of the heart taking place at a particular time, is the cause and encouragement of much self-righteousness, and conse-

quently the inlet of sad and dangerous delusions ! When he looked at the temper and character of some who professed to have experienced this great and entire change of heart, how often did he see manifested in their conduct and behaviour, no small conceit of opinion, or self importance, combined with a bitter, censorious, condemnatory, narrow, and bigoted state of feeling towards those who differed from themselves in any considerable degree on religious questions ; and when he remembered the description of the *true* Christian given by Paul in 1 Cor. xiii., he could not but fear that such persons as these must be meant by those spoken of by the prophet, who “  *speak peace to themselves when there is no peace !* ” He considered also, that those who obey the injunction of the Lord to learn of Him meekness and lowliness of heart, must needs be teachable in their disposition, thirsting for an increase of divine wisdom and knowledge ; and perceiving that they know almost nothing compared with the things which they have yet to learn, must needs be willing to receive instruction from any quarter : he concluded therefore, that if the change of heart asserted *had been real*, there would not have existed so much indifference as he found to exist, about improvement in divine knowledge ; or so much reluctance to submit present opinions to fair discussion ; or so much unwillingness to learn any thing from persons of a different opinion ; or so little candour ; and openness to conviction ;—Job felt sure, that the *really* changed *must of necessity* be “ meek and lowly in heart,” hungering and thirsting for improvement in knowledge and righteousness ; and if so, that they could not possibly have all these striking defects and deficiencies. He heard some persons say, that they were formerly moral men, and sincerely feared God, *before they became real Christians*, and he was led to doubt, whether such persons knew what they were talking of. If he himself had been asked who were *real* Christians, he would have replied, “ They who fear the Christian’s God, and keep his commandments ; ” for he agreed with the saying of Dr. Whichcott, that “ nothing is more spiritual than that which is moral,” provided the fear of God be the foundation of it. But he found that religious

professors assume to themselves what *they* deem a much higher character than *merely* fearing God and keeping his commandments (!) and this, strange to say, is brought about, according to their statement, by the conviction, that no one can keep the commandments, and by a belief that God will *excuse them* for their inability or omission "for Christ's sake;" and they further state that this conviction and belief (which ought to have filled them, as Job thought, with sadness and sorrow) produced such an abiding sense of the love of God as filled their hearts with an ardent love to him in return. Thus they were in the habit of declaring in the words of John, but in a sense different from that intended by him, "*we love Him because He first loved us.*" No doubt the Apostle meant by these words, that the love kindled in us, and which is *identical* with keeping God's commandments, is kindled only by Love Divine; but in applying these words to themselves, they meant to say that they loved God *for what he had done for them, or had promised to do*; but Job concluded that this could not be the kind of love meant by John, because John had heard his Master say, "*If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them*" (Luke vi. 32), from which words it appeared clear, that to love God merely *for what he has done* for us, or from the hope of obtaining some further good from him, is a *selfish love*, resembling the love which even sinners, or actually wicked men, bear to those who love them, or serve their turn. This he was certain could not be *that* love of God which is the chief of all the virtues. He remembered those plain words of John, "*this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments,*" and he saw that *perfect* love, and *perfect* keeping the commandments, must needs be one and the same thing.

He could see that *to love to keep* the commandments is the same thing as to love goodness; and to love goodness is the same thing as to love God, for God is Goodness Itself. He saw that no one can love goodness without loving God, nor love God without loving goodness. He perceived that the love of God was generally thought of as *merely personal* love, and was often talked about in a sort of amatory lan-

guage which he regarded as very unbecoming, and quite inapplicable to the Divine Being. To the Son of God, as the merciful Deliverer from his Father's wrath, this kind of language was most frequently and fervently applied, shewing in what a different light those who used it respectively regarded the Son and the Father. The former they would address, saying, "Dear Lord Jesus!" but he never heard them say "Dear God Jehovah!" nor "Dear Heavenly Father!" And here it may be remarked by the way, that, however trifling these indications may seem, they shew how *completely* the Father and Son are regarded as of a *totally different character*: and further, they suggest, how *strangely* the professed love of such persons to God (!) must be *divided* between *two Objects* of so different a character,—the One, a Being whose tender mercy they celebrate with feelings of grateful confidence; and the other, a Being whose vindictive justice they deprecate with sentiments of withering fear and painful awe.—But to return. Job saw clearly, that God should be loved for what HE is, and not in a *personal* manner, which, in reference to God, is *purely imaginative*, and which can only be proper and *real* between those who stand in the personal relation of mutual wants and sympathies. He saw that to love truth is to love God, because God is Truth Itself, and that no one can love truth, and thus love God, *without desiring to advance in divine knowledge, and to proceed from the obscurity of mystery to the clear light of spiritual intelligence*; he saw that, since God is Goodness Itself, no one can *really* love God unless he desires *to grow* in goodness ABOVE ALL THINGS; he saw, therefore, that he who is indifferent about improvement in *divine knowledge*, cannot love *truth*, and therefore cannot love God; and that further, neither can he truly love God who does not love goodness *supremely* and *for its own sake*, and *wherever* he finds it, and with whatever opinions it is associated.

But of all this his professedly "*real Christian*" friends seemed quite unaware! Having taken no heed to the Apostle's clear definition of love to God, as consisting in keeping his commandments, when they were asked what the love of God is, they replied, "A feeling of the mind," and were quite surprised at this statement being objected

to as something quite uncertain and indefinite, inasmuch as the quality of a feeling can only be known by the quality of the *acts* which spring from it; and therefore the only conclusive sign of love to God is—keeping his commandments. Job felt convinced, that even although a man might desire to love God in God's way, it was not at all consistent or compatible with *that* love, that he should go about proclaiming to others the greatness of his love to God. He could not reconcile such proceedings (so lamentably common) with "lowliness of heart." He could not think that any truly humble Christian would go and trumpet abroad, that he possessed the greatest of all the virtues, in the greatest degree; and far greater than those whom he described as not being *real* Christians, because they *ONLY* feared God, and kept his commandments! Although in some cases such boasting, for it is nothing else, might be excused on the ground of ignorance and delusion, in numerous cases he saw it was mere Pharisaical pretension, and he remembered the solemn admonition, "*Except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" What, said our friend to himself, would be thought of a man who should go about saying, "I do so love my neighbor," or in other words, "I am *so very* benevolent;" or "I am *so very* sincere and honest," or "I am *so very* humble;" or "I am *so very* chaste and pure;" or "I am *so very* wise in religious knowledge?"—Job could see no difference between such boasting as this and a person saying, "I am a *real* Christian," "I am vitally religious," "I have such an ardent love to God!" "I am a vast deal better than a *merely* moral man!" And with great pain to himself, our observant friend concluded that *true* love to God, (which, as observed, is a love to Him for what he is, rather than for what HE DOES,) and which is the noblest affection of the human heart, cannot possibly put itself forth in such palpable manifestations of spiritual pride and religious boasting! If a man may not publish his own virtues, surely he may not proclaim that he possesses the greatest of all virtues in the greatest degree! Job, nevertheless, saw that a man could not but experience the *blessedness* of a *real* love to God, while he sincerely reverences and keeps his commandments; and that, therefore, it is natural

and consistent to testify, *in the abstract*, that the ways of true religion are the same as those of true wisdom, and that "all her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." He knew that every *real* Christian *must know* by experience, that "the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." But he could not reconcile with *his* ideas of Christian humility, that a man should be continually going about and publishing that such is his individual experience. He feared that there might be a snake lurking in the grass; that a secret desire of being admired as a saint might prompt him to proclaim his saintship, in the form of a testimony from experience! Knowing that it is very agreeable to man's natural self-love that he should form a good opinion of himself, Job saw that it was very easy for an individual to excite a persuasion in himself, under the impulse of self-love, that he has been made altogether holy, and is become, in an eminent degree, a favourite with God! and, perhaps, there is not much difference in reality, between the self-complacent idea, that a man is holy *by nature*, and the equally self-complacent idea, that *he is become so by an instantaneous change!* The one is certainly as consistent with experience as the other. Self-love may *equally* preside in both cases; and, on the other hand, in both cases, God may *equally* be *confessed* the Giver of the supposed holiness.

Job saw increasing reason to conclude that the fanatical conceit of an *instantaneous* change, by leading to a persuasion of superior holiness, holds the mind in the fetters of self-complacent selfishness, and self-worship; and is the greatest hindrance to the improvement of both the heart and the understanding, because it effectually precludes that advancement in spiritual intelligence and wisdom, which is promised only to the humble, the meek, and the lowly in heart. Our friend could not but see, as he glanced over the professedly religious world, that the prevalent and almost universal feeling and idea with religious individuals is, (supposing expression to be given to that feeling,) "I AM A FAVOURITE WITH GOD;" and, judging from their demeanour, many seemed ready to add, "*and I am not a little proud of it!*" And, truly, no one *can* think that God regards him with *PARTIALITY* *without* imputing to *himself* something

like superior holiness either as the ground, or as the consequence, of such favour. But how opposite is all this self-complacent dwelling upon supposed superior holiness to the command, "*Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth!*"

Our friend had no doubt that those who described their feelings of being *real* Christians, and exulted in their experiencing *such ardent* love to God, really had the feelings they described, but he doubted, and more than doubted, the divine origin of such feelings. He feared that they were nothing but self-created delusions, and he felt more strongly convinced that very frequently they are so, when he remembered the words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He did not see why ill-informed and ill-regulated minds,—minds which repudiate the exercise of reason as sinful,—might not form a "fool's paradise" in religious as well as in worldly respects. But still he was very far from denying that Christian *sincerity* may be the companion of groundless delusions; and whenever he saw collateral evidences of the existence of sincerity, he respected it, and rejoiced that it would not be overlooked by the Father of mercies! Nevertheless, he could not but consider this unhappy persuasion, owing to the spiritual self-complacency consequent upon it, as the bane and bar to improvement, in the self-styled "religious world." Neither could he shut his eyes to the fact, that great evils result from individuals of the Trinitarian and Arian sects agreeing, as it were, by a tacit understanding, to account and call each other "saints," "pious people," "truly religious," "religious" *par eminence*, "real Christians," "God's peculiar people," "those who love God and his saints," "holier than others," and all this merely on account of their *mutual strong persuasion* of the supposed fact, that Jesus Christ was punished by his Father for *their individual* sins, and that the Father accounts them holy by virtue of this persuasion, and the acts of religious worship which spring from it! Job saw that this virtual barter of religious flattery and "*caw me, caw thee*," combined with a partizan zeal, is a much closer and stronger bond of union between sects than unity of opinion; for, generally speaking, excepting the belief that an innocent Person was punished in their

place, and that salvation comes by believing this, there is scarcely any point of faith or religious knowledge in which individuals agree, or with which, indeed, they concern themselves! By thus shutting out from the mind all advancement and increase of knowledge by means of free, fair, and candid discussion, too many small-minded persons imagine, that they are imitating the example of the Apostle when he said, "*I determined NOT TO KNOW ANY THING among you SAVE Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*" Confining themselves to the mere words of this sentence, or understanding them in that narrow and dim sense which results from the belief already described, and which these words are supposed to involve, such persons content themselves with crying out, "I want to know nothing but Christ, and Him crucified," without having the least idea of the *vast extent* of spiritual knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom involved in *really* and *rightly* knowing JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified.

Job's reflections on the prevalence of the persuasion existing with numerous self-styled religious individuals, that they are *peculiarly* the subjects of Divine favour, or that they possess a peculiar portion of Divine Grace, naturally led him to the contemplation of what is called "religious experience," and also the practice of detailing it at religious meetings, such meetings especially as the "class meetings" amongst the Methodists. In the first place, he desired to make every admission of *sincerity* in those who are accustomed to tell their "experience;" for although the practice necessarily *opens* the door to dishonest inventions, he did not question but that great numbers had really experienced the feelings they described. But this did not at all prove, that they were free from self-delusion; or that all their feelings really resulted from a Divine operation upon their minds. As he had concluded that the persuasion entertained by an individual of his possessing a peculiar degree of divine favour, accompanied with an assurance that he is safe from condemnation *through faith*, is not a divine gift, but a delusive self-creation, he saw, in this vaunted "experience," nothing but the too evident sign of an effort to keep up the original deceptive persuasion, by means of



self-excitement, assisted by mutual excitement. He said to himself, What real spiritual benefits are likely to result from experience meetings? In other words, What addition is made to real spiritual *intelligence*, and to *definite* spiritual and *moral* virtue or *goodness*? One had declared how much he groaned under a sense of sin,—but our friend found, that he was by no means sensible of the faults which others could see plainly enough in his carriage, feelings, temper, and conduct, whence he concluded, that even a sincerely professed sense of sin, separate from *serious self-examination*, has nothing intelligent in its constitution, nor does it tend to the removal of the sins really existing, and, therefore, that it is,—for what else can it be?—a mere morbid feeling, resulting from low spirits, and a nervous constitution of body. Job noticed other cases in which he feared the secret working of the love of display, or a thirst for admiration, or a sinister view to influence and power; and also cases in which he discerned the mere force of imitation acting on feebler minds; and also the simulation practised by those who felt that they *must* say something, or lose estimation by being thought deficient in spiritual-mindedness. He saw that where the mind was not *uniformly* honest and sincere in *other matters*, the detailing of experience afforded a ready occasion for empty imitations and hollow pretensions.—An individual in good spirits, or in good humour with himself, or with his circumstances, and, therefore, with all the world, was prepared to shew forth his possession of “real religion” by declaring how *happy* he was in the enjoyment of the *love of God*! but Job could not see that the love thus professed answered to the Apostolic definitions of “the love of God” already noticed. Another deeply mourned that he was tossed to and fro; that at one time he felt so happy; and then again, he thought he must be lost, because he had not that assurance of peace with God which a true faith, it is said, bestows: but Job saw that this person was liable to great fluctuations in his natural temperament, by which *his* experience was sufficiently accounted for. Hence he was led to say within himself,—Of what avail are all these fluctuations of blind natural feeling to the furtherance of the great process of restoring man to the image and likeness of God, that is,

of Divine Love and Wisdom ? It appears to me to be but a mere simulation of the *real* changes which the truly spiritual mind experiences, as it passes from a selfish state to a state of generous brotherly love, mercy, forbearance, and self-denial. Here is a man mourning that he has lost a sense of a certain kind of happiness, but what is this but a merely selfish complaint ? It would be a very different thing if these "real Christians" had an humble, self-abasing experience of their weakness in coming up to the divine moral law, *in some particular respect* : as of their instability in pursuing plans of improvement in spiritual intelligence ; and of their want of self-denial, firmness, and perseverance, in their endeavours to promote the well-being of others, and in shewing mercy without partiality or exception ! It is doubtful whether the *utterance* even of such *legitimate* humiliating feelings as these, except under very peculiar circumstances, is free from objection ; but certainly a complaint of *this* kind would be very different from the merely selfish complaint of having lost the satisfaction attendant upon a persuasive assurance of personal enjoyment hereafter, and which is something very like a self-excited, and therefore, selfish persuasion. Job had no doubt, since Divine Providence overrules all things for good to man, as far as possible, that *some good* is sometimes brought out of the faults of nervous temperament above described, and to which he felt justified in tracing a *large* proportion of even *sincere* religious experiences.\* Our friend believed that *real* mental trials or temptations are experienced by some ;

\* The writer knew two very worthy elderly dissenters, who were of a nervous temperament, and when under the influence of low spirits, were in the habit of declaring to their friends what great sinners they were, and how desperate their cases were, and even that they had little or no hope of salvation ; by all which, however, they only meant, that they felt miserable, because they were not so lifted up as at other times with a persuasion and assurance of divine favour and eternal happiness ! These persons we will call A. and B. ; a third, a common friend, *not of their religious persuasion*, (but who knew their worth, and took the following good-natured method of reproofing their weakness,) we will call C. C. went to A. and said, "I have just heard a very bad character indeed of your friend B. ; I have been informed that there is not a man to

such as inward conflicts between conscience and corrupt inclination; but he did not think that such conflicts as these are experienced by any but those with whom all religion, even when *doctrinally* referred to faith, is *practically* believed to consist in *goodness*. The really practical Christian sustains a real conflict between good and evil; trust and distrust; but the conflicts of a mere faith-Christian are between high spirits and low spirits, or between a sort of selfish hope, and a selfish fear, about joys and sorrows of a selfish kind, in the world to come. As for a large proportion of the declarations of an experience of great happiness,—implying, of necessity, great holiness,—Job could not see any thing in them but the going forth of self-righteousness, self-complacency, and self-congratulation. It is true, that he found such declarations frequently accompanied with exclamations of, “Glory be to God for it!” But he had heard the covetous, who really bless only themselves, bless God for an increase of wealth, in the hope of getting a still further increase thereby; and he could not tell how far the cry of, “Glory be to God,” for the possession of a mere feeling,—a feeling void, as far as he could see, of any *practical result or moral efficacy*, might not resemble the selfish thanksgivings of the covetous. He asked himself this question: Suppose I am enabled to do a disinterested action, and I thank God for it, am I moved thereby, to go and tell others how happy I feel *that I have done it*? Certainly not. To do so would be contrary to both the spirit and the letter of the Gospel. Granting, then, even that the professed “love to God” is a reality, such a *telling of it* is contrary to clear Christian precepts; and, on the other hand, admitting such a telling of experience to be grounded in self-deception, the conclusion follows, that *what is called* Christian experience is almost entirely an unhappy compound of self-deception and erroneous views; and is, to a great extent, a thing lighter than vanity; af-

be found any where more wicked than he is.” To this A. warmly replied, “Who is your informant? The accusation is utterly false. There does not exist a better man than my friend B. I demand to know your informant, that I may trace this calumny to its source; tell me who is your author?” To which C. very calmly replied, “HIMSELF!”

fording an evidence of the want, rather than the possession, of genuine, vital, that is, *universally practical religion*. And so the friends of *this kind* of experimental religion may take their choice between the two propositions,—their telling of experiences is either vain boasting, or the result of self-deception!

On one occasion Job mentioned to one of his Baptist friends, that he had some doubts respecting the truth of some points which are esteemed essential doctrines of the Gospel, when he was promptly met, not by reasonings by which his understanding might be convinced and receive light or correction, but by exclamations to the following effect: "I never was so happy as I am now. I have experienced misfortunes, and have been sick even unto death; and under all these circumstances, and even in the prospect of death and judgment, my religion has supported me; and since it has never abandoned me, I will never abandon it." Our friend perceived that there was no replying to such arguments as these. He saw that where a mere feeling is referred to as a demonstration perfectly conclusive, nothing can be done by reasoning for the release of the understanding from the captivity of error. On further reflection, he judged, that it would be very difficult to decide what is the origin of such experimental feelings; and how much there is of self-complacency mingled with them, on the one hand, and how much of that encouragement on the other, which appears to be vouchsafed, by the impartial Source of good, to sincere persons of every religion. He saw that precisely the same language might be found in the mouth not only of every description of Christian believer, but even in the mouth of Mahometans, and idolaters; and hence he inferred that *such* an argument is as good in the mouth of a Hindoo, who is quietly waiting to be drowned by the Ganges, in favour of *his* religion, as it is in the mouth of an Evangelical, in favour of *his* religion! Nothing, indeed, can be more irrational than to make mere feelings the test of truth, instead of referring the point to the judgment, whose province it is to investigate, and to obtain, and hear evidence. As well might a deaf man be required to determine on the quality of a melody by means of his eyesight, as the *feel-*

*ings* be called on to decide on the evidence of truth! Job saw men in seasons of calamity exulting in their religious opinions, although such opinions were of the most opposite kind; nay, he saw those who, when in health, seemed practically to despise all *really* Christian principles of practice, when in sickness, glory in the confidence their religion inspired. To *this* confidence, however, he could not assign any higher origin than self-love, delighting itself with self-delusion! But when he saw the well-disposed of every Christian denomination, and also even the well-disposed Mahometan and idolater, meekly bearing up under sorrow, and calmly looking death in the face, each gratefully testifying to the support and consolation of his religion, he lifted up his heart to the benevolent Father of all, who kindly bestows on every sincere mind all the comfort and joy that conscientiousness can impart to erroneous religious sentiments. With these gratifying feelings he disposed of the fallacious argument, that, because a man feels happy in his religious opinions, and has found support from them in affliction, they *must* necessarily be accurate and true. On the same grounds he dismissed the argument equally erroneously drawn from happy death-beds; for he found that not only every variety of religionists point to the peaceful deaths of persons of their party, but even that many professed deists have, to all appearance, calmly departed in peace.

Although Job perceived a considerable degree of self-deception to be connected with the subject of Christian experience, he was far from undervaluing the importance of holding an inward communion with God, by the devout disposition of the feelings and thoughts reverentially before Him; and by seeking that calm and solemn manifestation of his Divine presence by the Spirit in the inmost recesses of the soul, which awakens the affections of hope, comfort, confidence, peace, and joy. And this led him to pay some attention to the doctrine of the Quakers, or "Society of Friends," on this subject; in which he found, however, no little uncertainty and confusion of ideas. He found that they profess to go beyond other Christians in attending to the movements, or hearkening to the voice of the Divine

Spirit in the interiors of their minds; that they regard this as the indispensable mark of vital religion, and account all who merely remember and do the Christian precepts from a sincere regard to the Divine will, as little better than formalists; he found that the more zealous Quakers profess to regard the inward dictates given (as they suppose) by the Holy Spirit, as their *principal* guide, accounting the exclusive consultation of Scripture for guidance in thinking and acting, as an abandonment of a superior for an inferior light and authority. Nevertheless, they profess a firm belief in Scripture, although some quote its apparent contradictions in proof of the Spirit being the safer guide, thus too plainly shewing the *comparatively* mean idea they entertain of the Scripture. When pressed by controversy, however, eminent Quakers will admit, that no inward dictate is to be attended to, unless it be in agreement with Scripture. He found that Quakers not only seek an inward dictate on religious subjects for their enlightenment therein, but that they also seek a dictate or "impression," and which they describe as producing "a great concern upon their mind," to guide them where they shall go, and instruct them what they shall do, both in immediate connexion with religious engagements, and also with other matters. And herein they follow the example of their founder, George Fox, doubtless a well-meaning man, and a practical Christian, but one who, in waiting for dictates, sometimes got such as were of more than questionable origin.\* On this

\* Take, for instance, the following extract from George Fox's journal. "I saw three steeple house spires, and they struck at my life. Immediately the word of the Lord came to me, that I must go thither. I stepped away, and went by my eye over hedge and ditch, till I came within a mile of Lichfield. Then I was commanded by the Lord to pull off my shoes;—I stood still, for it was winter; and the Word of the Lord was like a fire in me. So I put off my shoes, and left them with some shepherds. As soon as I was got within the city, the word of the Lord came to me again, saying, 'Cry, *woe unto the bloody city of Lichfield.*' So I went up and down the street, crying with a loud voice, '*woe to the bloody city of Lichfield.*' As I went thus crying through the streets, there seemed to me to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market-place appeared like a pool of blood. Return-

subject, then, our friend reasoned as follows. If, said he, there are given by the Spirit inwardly sensible dictates on religious subjects, in addition to the suggestions of Scripture, and also dictates in addition to the dictates of reason on matters of practical prudence, I do not see how they can co-exist in practice compatibly with each other, or on the supposition of the compatibility of supernatural dictates with those of Scripture and reason, how they can be distinguished from each other, so that one shall not be taken for the other; for it is possible that the Spirit may suggest the *ideas* imbibed from Scripture, without adhering to the very words of it. I can understand how the Spirit may convey an influence which, although by itself it is secret and insensible, becomes sensible by its investing itself in those dictates of Scripture and reason which it finds in the memory; but if the dictate of the Spirit and of Scripture be not *thus identical*, how can they go into operation co-evally and together, so that one shall not hinder the intended effect of the other? If the Spirit can dictate nothing but what agrees with Scripture, the Scripture is then plainly sufficient by itself, or, at any rate, it is the first thing of the two to be regarded; it is the standard by which the dictate is to be tested; it is the regulator of the degree of attention to be paid to the dictate, and that which regulates is the chief, and not that which is regulated. And further, if the Spirit only dictates what is to be found in Scripture, he that goes by the Scripture must, of necessity, at the same time go with the Spirit. Two distinct sets of dictates cannot

ing to the shepherds, I took my shoes of them again; but the fire of the Lord was so in my feet, and all over me, that I was at a stand whether I should put on my shoes or not, till I felt freedom from the Lord so to do. *After this*, a deep consideration came upon me, *why* I should be sent to cry against *that* city, and call it the 'bloody city.' Afterwards I came to understand that in the emperor Dioclesian's time, a thousand Christians were martyred in Lichfield! Now this happened, the reader will remember, above thirteen centuries previous, long before a single brick in the *present* "bloody city" had existence! Those who know how to "*try the spirits*," according to the exhortation of the Apostle, will know to what origin the above silly dictate should be attributed.

exercise an equal and co-existent power, because they cannot command an equal degree of attention and regard. He who believes that the Spirit gives a sensible dictate separately from Scripture, and who also believes in the Divine authority of Scripture, is something like a man with two masters; and, as a consequence, in practice, he will be found holding to the one and neglecting or despising the other. He who believes that the Scripture applied to the conscience by the *secret* operation of the Spirit, is the only dictate which is really vouchsafed from heaven, has only One Master, and that is the Author of the Word and the Giver of the Spirit, even of that Spirit which dictated the Word, and which operates by it; for "*the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.*" This is the belief of Christians generally, and by so much as Quakers go beyond this, they cannot but go wrong, by vainly endeavouring to set up two incompatible guides, and which are equally incompatible whether they are suffered to be of equal or of unequal authority. If the undefined and unfixed dictate (supposed to be) of the Spirit be thought, as doubtless it is by many Quakers, to be of greater authority and of superior light and power than the definite and fixed dictates of the written Word, the latter must proportionably fall into neglect; and he who omits to consult the Word, in order to seek a supernatural dictate separate from and independent of it, because he believes it to be superior to the Word, does so far practically render the Word of God "of none effect:" he holds to that master whose word he can mould to his own fancy, and which master *may be* no other than his own self; and he despises that Master whose firmly written Word is too stubborn to be accommodated and bent to his wishes. If Scripture be a sufficient guide, under the influence of that Omnipresent Spirit which is promised to the humble and the contrite, what need can there be of any other dictate besides the existing all-sufficient one? even of that unerring and permanent rule of faith and life, which the Wisdom of God has given to man in the written Word? An unwritten dictate is, or may be, even a more unsafe and uncertain guide than the Romish traditions! It is true that the Scripture is understood variously, and is interpreted with different degrees of accuracy and intelligence; but wisdom to understand it is not given, neither is it in-



creased, by means of *sensible* inward dictates, but according to the ordinary laws of mental culture, while the mind is placed under the *secret* influence of the Most High, by humility and purity. If a sensible dictate be *something more* than the Word, it is not to be trusted, even according to the Quaker admission, that no dictate is to be regarded which is not in agreement with the Word; but if it be not *something more* than the Word, then is it identical with the Word, so that there can be no need of it, nor any necessity for seeking or desiring it, separately from, or in addition to, the Word, since, in this case, all the real dictates of the Spirit are given by means of the Word, and not otherwise. In fact, an additional inward dictate can have no ground in necessity or utility, except upon the supposition of the insufficiency of Scripture for the enlightenment of mankind. But who will dare, without qualification or reserve, openly to avow this proposition? The same rule will apply to inward dictates about things for the regulation of which cultivated and enlightened reason is generally considered sufficient. Either we must despise and leave our reason in order to seek and follow a dictate, or else we must make our reason the rule or test of the dictate, and thus superior to it; in which case we actually follow the dictate of reason, though we persuade ourselves we are following the dictate of the Spirit. If it be good to quit the guidance of reason, and to wait till some imagination springs up in the mind during the cultivation of a state of mental vacancy, called seeking the Spirit, and which imagination we may dignify with the title of a dictate of the Spirit, let us be consistent, and give up the dignity of being rational agents, in order to become the passive instruments of supernatural dictates, the origin of which, however, we cannot demonstrate; and which *may* come from above, but which *may* also come from below! If our reason, subject to religious truth, and *therefore* blessed with heavenly light, has been given us as a safe guide, and we are so unthankful as to abandon its guidance, what can be expected but that, for want of its needful protection, we shall become the dupes of the powers of darkness? A similar remark also applies to the parallel abandonment of Scripture. Those persons, said Job, may distrust Scrip-

ture and reason, and seek and depend upon inward dictates, who choose it; but for my part, I can see nothing but delusion, as the result of so doing; and the only production against it is that which, I believe, is often unknowingly enjoyed, when the individual really follows the dictates of his reason and of Scripture, while he vainly persuades himself that he is favoured with a dictate from heaven! There is something very flattering to our self-complacency in supposing that we are, by virtue of such dictates, the highly distinguished subjects of Divine favour! and this, certainly, is the feeling which appears to pervade George Fox's journal. It would be well if this liability were guarded against by all who desire to maintain simplicity of heart.

Besides, while the dictate of Scripture is a fixed dictate, the dictate inwardly sought must vary according to individual character. We know that every one has his ruling principle, and that this is either good or bad, wise or infatuated; we know that this is the leading and most active spring of thought; and even if we grant that thoughts arising from a ruling good principle may be reasonably traced to heaven, there will still remain all the thoughts which originate in a *fixed* or *temporary* ruling evil principle, (as the case may be,) and which is the source of dictates not to be trusted, because they *cannot* come from above. I fear that there is no little reason to apprehend that many Quakers are really consulting the dictates of their own self-will, while they think that they are courting a dictate from the Spirit, and that, in too many cases, the plain Scripture is neglected to seek this dictate, because there is not sufficient humility to walk by any thing so common as that book which is accessible to all alike; and because the self-hood is flattered with the thought of the extraordinary distinction conferred by a Divine dictate, which is personal and peculiar to a man's own individual and dearly beloved self! I would advise all upright Quakers to see to it, that the humble appearance of their "outward man" is not in contradiction to that state of pride, into which there must, at least, be great danger of falling, when the plain Scripture is neglected to seek a *direct* personal dictate, because this is supposed to be the distinguishing privilege of heaven's peculiar favorites!

As regards the question of the *superiority* of the dictate

of the Inward Word to the teaching of the Written Word, I see reason to believe, that the best of the Quakers do not believe this, but hold the principle of Divine influences in the same way as spiritually minded Christians in general, only cultivating inward communion with the Lord with more than usual diligence and fervour. But as for those Quakers who affirm the *superiority* of the inward dictate, I am inclined to believe that they form the *self-satisfied* portion of the "society," with the exception of a few warm headed or melancholy, but honest enthusiasts, who cannot content themselves with patiently and gradually mounting the Hill of Zion by the help of the ladder of Scripture, but must seek out for some method which appears to promise more celerity and less labour. The misguided victims of their secret and undetected, because unexplored pride and vanity, will be likely to pass by the *humbling* Scripture which would scrutinize and condemn them, to seek a dictate which tends to elevate them in their own esteem, and which is only perceived as homogeneous by them because it is, in reality, the kindling of their own ruling principle, the offspring of their own essential self, the dictate of their own self-will, or of the inventive faculty of their imagination under the secret impulse of self-will, but which they dignify with the vain title of a dictate of the Spirit!

To me it appears, when it is said by Quakers that no dictate is to be followed if it be contrary to Scripture and reason, that the peculiar principle of the Quakers is then fairly given up; or is pared down to the standard of the general Christian belief. It is given up because it is *felt* to be untenable; and because a glimmering perception suggests, that two concurrent Divine authorities and guides are utterly incompatible with each other, unless, indeed, they are identical in operation!

And when I see an assembly of Quakers at meeting, engaged in silent worship, I cannot help thinking, that while the truly pious amongst them are looking to God to kindle their pure affections into holy thoughts, all those who are of a different character, while they are turning their thoughts inward, are only listening to the dictates of a spirit *very different* from the Divine Spirit! For however the good and wise may be benefited by silent worship, to

merely external, selfish and worldly characters, plain Scriptural instruction and prayer would be more suitable ; for by such means they might be led to experience some temporary awakening, and some elevation above their usual grovelling state of thought : instead of their being left and given up to the influences of their own low feelings and narrow conceptions under the mask of silent worship, some searching truth might then make an impression upon them, so as to abide with them, and prove effectual, in the end, to reprove their faults, and to instruct them in the way of righteousness. I cannot but think that when a community adopts silent worship, it leaves the worldly minded of its body,—always a large proportion,—without the aid of that kind of public worship which is alone calculated to reach them, and to raise them above their ordinary degraded state of mind. Look at the covetous, or the sensual man, or the vain woman, at meetings for silent worship. They are consulting and seeking a dictate from *their God* : but who is the God of that man whose “covetousness is idolatry?” or of him “whose God is his belly?” or of that vain woman who herself seeks to be idolized, and in the absence of other worshipers, worships herself? Inquire and learn who is the God of these persons, for it is of *this* god that they are asking counsel, and it is he who is the real object of their silent worship, and the originator of the thoughts which are then active.

Job observed that, owing to Quakers having no creed, there exists amongst them every diversity of opinion respecting the Object of worship. Some identify Jesus Christ with the One God, and hold communion exclusively with Him, under the title of “the Head of the Church ;” but the majority either hold the Tri-personal doctrine strictly, or under a modification, with a leaning towards Arianism ; while some, with Unitarians, deny altogether the Divinity of “the Son of God.” These latter, however, when they publish their sentiments, are generally disowned by the majority.

The more zealous Quakers contend that there is no reason why Divine communications should not be enjoyed by all true Christians as well as by the old patriarchs, prophets, and apostles ; they contend that the promise of the gifts of

the Spirit in the form of internal dictation and guidance, was not confined to the apostles, but was intended to be the privilege of all succeeding Christians who earnestly, and silently, seek its fulfilment. But really this appears to be only one step behind the Roman Catholics, who insist that the transmission and active exercise of the power of working miracles is the proper sign of a true church. The Catholic believes that his church possesses the gift of healing, though not always nor everywhere in operation; while the Quaker believes in the possibility of his being miraculously led hither and thither by the Spirit. The more prudent Friends, however, prefer the guidance of reason in their own cases, and leave the privilege of receiving dictates, of which, as Quakers, they make their boast, to those persons whose *temperament* they certainly do not covet, although they profess to admire the phenomena which it generates, as the fruits of the Spirit.

When Job became acquainted with the doctrines of the New Church, and learned the true nature of the divine holiness of the Word, he saw the vanity of the notion of the Quakers, that their dictates are a continuation of, and therefore are of the same value and authority as, the inspired leadings granted to prophets and apostles of old, and which have become a portion of the records of the Divine Word: he saw that, although some of the dictates granted of old, as mentioned in the Word, when viewed in their merely literal sense, appear trifling and strange, yet when they are viewed in their spiritual sense, they rise to a dignity which can never belong to any dictate given to man in his individual capacity, however genuine its origin. In respect to all that is written in the Word, it is the repository of angelic and Divine wisdom, and hence the Word in its inmost ground is infinite: but at the best, any dictate that can be given to man for his individual leading, is, like himself, finite. The Word is the Divine Wisdom accommodated to human reception, by being clothed in natural images and ideas; but still it is the Divine Wisdom, and the letter of the Word is as much a portion of that Wisdom as the human body which envelopes the soul, is a part of the man. As for the Quaker dictates, such for instance as those contained in George Fox's journal, so far as they are

not contrary to Scripture and reason, Scripture and reason would have been amply sufficient for the accomplishment of their objects, without any additional dictates from any source whatever.

In making these comments on the peculiar doctrine of "the Society of Friends," Job Abbott had no desire to depreciate the virtues of many eminent members of that society; he was convinced, however, that their attainments could not in fairness be attributed to their peculiar doctrine, but to a judicious system of mental culture, equally open to all who are led by the Scriptures to constant inward communion with God, while they diligently walk with Him in the way of His commandments.

Returning to the General Baptist Confession of faith. Our friend experienced a difficulty in reconciling article 16 with the Scripture. He found that the Scripture clearly means by the elect and the reprobate, the good and the bad; while this article of the Confession says, that "the elect are believers, and the reprobate, unbelievers: and that God *has appointed* that believers shall be saved, and that unbelievers shall be damned." *But who are really meant here*, said Job, by believers and unbelievers? Why, undoubtedly, all who do believe, or who do not believe, in the vicarious sacrifice *as believed in by the General Baptists!* In other words, this article declares, that *God has appointed, that all shall be damned who do not believe the doctrine of the General Baptists!* I can be no party to such hideous bigotry as this, said our friend! How different this appears to me from the description of that unbelief which brings condemnation, as given by Jesus Christ Himself! Our Lord traced the unbelief which he denounced to *its cause and motive*, as that which made the unbelief condemnatory, or otherwise; and thus he taught us, that it is on account of this *cause or motive* that men are "*condemned already*," or *previously* to their unbelief. "*This*," said our Lord, "*IS THE CONDEMNATION, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light* BECAUSE THEIR DEEDS WERE EVIL" (John iii. 19). I do not find, continued Job, that any of those who call themselves "Evangelical" have any such

liberal judgment as this, or that they make the just distinction implied by the Saviour, between unbelievers who are such *from the love of evil*, and those who *are not*: and thus between those who err from wilfulness, and those who mistake through infirmity. The Saviour's classification is as distant from that of the Evangelicals, as heaven and heavenly love are distant from hell and infernal bigotry! The Evangelicals call those persons "believers," who believe in a certain unintelligible creed, and who, as they say, are *therefore* to be saved, because they believe that which they cannot understand! and all those persons they call "unbelievers," who cannot believe that creed, because it appears to them not to be true, and all such persons, they affirm, whatever their character, will assuredly be damned! No wonder, with such an arrogant and unfeeling article as this in their creed, that youthful Baptists should learn from it to become conceited religious coxcombs, and to despise many worthy persons of mature judgment and experience, because they are there described as "unbelievers," and "reprobates," under sentence of damnation!

I am willing to acknowledge, thought Job, that God opens the eyes of men to believe accordingly as He sees fit; but I can never admit that all persons who have not *decidedly* turned their thoughts to *specific* religious doctrines, but who nevertheless "fear God and keep his commandments," are numbered with the "Reprobate!" I cannot class amongst "Reprobates appointed to be damned," the *majority* of the inhabitants of the earth, because they are not Christians, or not believers in the Baptist *version* or *interpretation* of the Apostolic doctrine of atonement! Surely men must have hard hearts, notwithstanding their lamentations over the lost heathen, when they can accuse the Father of mercies of such grievous injustice and cruelty! For my part, thought Job, I could as soon worship Beelzebub as such a cruel Deity,—call Him by what name you please! A merciful *name* will not cast a veil of sanctity over cruel and unjust *attributes*, so as to hide them from the perception of honest and sensible men. I look at the nature, not at the mere name! How can true charity find a place in hearts that think all unbe-

lievers will be damned? And then Job recollected the words of Peter, "*Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in EVERY nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him*" (Acts x. 34). But Job saw clearly why it was that these words are never quoted at Missionary meetings, and why it is never fairly and openly stated, that when Peter used the words "every nation," he included *all idolatrous nations*, for at that time there was *only one* nation, the Jewish, which had any knowledge of the *True God*, and this *one* nation could not possibly be meant by "every nation." Job saw that if these words of Peter, and the parallel passages of Paul in Romans ii. were *honestly* presented at Missionary meetings, the collections would run small! It would not do, first to give the testimony of Paul that "*At the day of the righteous judgment of God, He will give glory, honour, and peace to EVERY MAN that worketh good; to the Jew first, and ALSO TO THE GENTILE: for there is no respect of persons with God;*" and then to testify, that all the heathen, whether workers of good or workers of evil, will go to hell unless they are informed by missionaries, and in consequence believe, that Christ was punished in their place! Job saw that if people were not told that they might save souls by their sixpences, they would keep their sixpences in their pockets! Nothing of less value or importance than the absolute salvation of souls in consequence of their contributions could possibly extract them. It would be of little or no use *merely* to point out the *moral* benefits which *might* result from the promulgation of Divine Truth. Such ethereal results would weigh but little with the unthinking, unreasoning multitude, whose passions must be roused, or wo to the collection! Hence it is that they are **POSITIVELY** told, that God will save no portion of the heathen world but that which believes in the vicarious sacrifice, as preached to them by Trinitarian or Arian missionaries, who, however, are far from being agreed among themselves as to what the Christian doctrine really is.\* Finally,

\* For instance. Both Wesleyan Methodist, and Calvinistic Missionaries regard Justification, or the method of sinners being justified, as



therefore, our friend concluded, that **THE TRUE GOD** is an infinitely more merciful and good Being than described in the Baptist *Confession of faith*. And as for the zeal manifested by Evangelicals for the salvation of souls, he saw clearly that it was not a zeal for the spiritual and moral improvement of their fellow-creatures, but a zeal to multiply the number of believers in their own creed, and that from the mistaken idea, that the Father of mercies has no mercy for any persons of any other religious belief! Hence he saw that it was a false zeal, because built on a false foundation, and had nothing respectable belonging to it, beyond a sort of *blind* conscientiousness and sincerity, at the best.

' Job found the Baptists not easily induced to answer the following questions in a straightforward, intelligible manner. "What do you definitely mean when you say, that man is to be saved by faith only? *What are the necessary particulars of that faith which alone saves?* State what you consider the Scriptures require to be believed on pain of damnation?" But although Job could get no *direct* answer from them, he found the answer to be furnished by them *indirectly*, in the Tract No. 65, published by the Religious Tract Society, and which they circulate, and thus adopt as their own, and as faithfully expressing their own sentiments. In this Tract it is said, "*Do you ask, then, what I must do to be saved?*" To this I answer, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' 'He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned.' *But what is it to believe in Him?* It is to believe that Jesus Christ is God equal with the Father; that he took our nature upon him, in order to obey the law which we had broken, and bear the *punishment* which our sins deserved" . . . . Well,

the good news or gospel they are sent to promulgate; but the *former* preach justification *as pardon*, accompanied with an instantaneous renewal of the mind; while the latter preach it as the being *accounted* righteous by the *imputation of the righteousness of Christ*, (a doctrine which the Wesleyans hold to be false,) *antecedent* to the actual renewal, called sanctification.

thought our friend, and so, he that believeth not THIS, shall be damned! In other words, Trinitarian and Arian Baptists proclaim to the world, "*Believe as we believe, or be damned!*" But suppose a person finds that he *cannot* believe this; that his faculties are so constituted that he is unable to believe, or gulp contradictions so palpable: suppose him to proceed to argue thus with his merciless judges; "Why, if Jesus, as you say, be God, and God *equal* with the Father, then the Father is equal with Jesus; and thus the Father and Son are two equal Gods! and if you say that they are *not* two Gods, but one God, and yet that they are two separate Divine Persons; then you convey the idea to me, that they are each of them only *demi*-gods, and, consequently, that neither of them are infinite, whence it would follow, according to the Baptist creed, that there is, in reality, no Infinite Being or God in existence; but only two *or* three semi-infinites! But if you say that they are both distinct *Infinite* or *Divine* Agents, was there ever such a contradiction uttered? Do you not say that Two Infinites are *not* Two Gods! that *one* Infinite Being is the same as one God, but that *two* Infinite Beings are *not* the same as *two* Gods! What sort of grammar or arithmetic is this? What sort of a belief must that be which can only be adopted by first breaking down the commonest and most absolute rules of grammar and arithmetic, and defying the remonstrances of all common sense and consistency? And as to the *second* article of your faith, you say that the Son was perfectly innocent, for he kept the whole law, and yet that he was punished for the sins of mankind! How can I,—how can any one, believe that by God's appointment an innocent person was punished, knowingly and deliberately, in the place of the guilty, so long as I find in the Scripture the following words, '*He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord*' (Prov. xvii. 15). How can I believe that God abominates the doing of that very thing which He nevertheless requires me, on pain of damnation, to believe that He did Himself; so that if I do not believe that *He did that which He abominates*, I shall be punished in hell for ever? And what would the admirers of this "*Religious*

Tract" be likely to say in reply to this plea? Possibly this; "Down with your scruples, or go to hell! for '*He that believeth not shall be damned.*'" But Job could not but think, that these words of Jesus Christ, thus improperly cited, must have been intended to mean, when applied to persons *in our day*, that every one should believe what his conscience and best judgment tell him that God *meant him to believe*; and then, notwithstanding any mistakes into which he may fall, he will come under the first clause,—"*He that believeth shall be saved,*" and not under the second, or condemnatory clause. Job declined decidedly to interpret the Lord's words as meaning, "*He that believeth* [what the Baptists, Methodists, Evangelicals, and Independents put forth as the proper interpretation of Scripture,] *shall be saved; but he that believeth not* [this] *shall be damned!*" He could not but observe the spiritual sleight of hand so often practised by religious professors, of confounding the *divine* words of Scripture with the *merely human* interpretation of them, and thus dexterously putting the latter in the place of the former; by this operation the orthodox interpreter exalts himself to the throne of God, and then, from his imaginary eminence, he proceeds to hurl his thunderbolts of merciless condemnation against all who dare to dispute the infallibility of *his* interpretations! It seemed to Job, that the acknowledgment of the words of Scripture, *however understood*, provided that they are *conscientiously* understood, is all that one fallible creature can have a *right* to exact from another.

Our friend did not often hear one of the Orthodox doctrines touched upon by the Baptists, which is, however, a great favourite with some "Evangelicals,"—the doctrine of the *imputation* of the merits and righteousness of the Son of God to those who believe in his punishment, in order to *make up* for their individual demerits and unrighteousness. Job regarded this doctrine as remarkably absurd and unscriptural, since it represents the Omniscient as accounting and pronouncing a man to be righteous who is just the reverse! nay, more, as imputing a *divine* merit and righteousness to a *man* that is a sinner, which is nothing short of making a God of him! for he who is *JUSTLY ac-*

counted or imputed as possessing divine righteousness, such as that of the Son of God, must needs be himself accounted or imputed Divine, and therefore, a God! Our friend considered this doctrine to be even blasphemous, because, in representing God as imputing the wicked to be righteous, it represents Him as imputing or thinking *what is not true*; and in representing Him as founding his decrees thereon, it represents Him as founding his decrees *on falsehood*. With such ideas in his mind, it was natural that the words of Solomon should suggest themselves, "*He that saith unto the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse; nations shall abhor him*" (Prov. xxiv. 24). Job could not see how it was possible to be right to curse man for imputing the wicked to be righteous, and to bless God for the very same thing!! He observed, in the tract No. 222, of "*The Religious Tract Society*," a statement as follows:—"To be justified is *to be regarded as righteous before God*: good works are of no avail in our justification: we are *accounted righteous* before God only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Justification precedes sanctification*. To be sanctified, is to have the understanding enlightened, the will renewed, and the affections rightly directed. *Before sanctification*, [and consequently, in the state of justification which precedes it,] the mind of man is darkened; hence he calls evil good, and good evil, and is incapable of understanding, choosing, and loving the things which adorn a rational nature. *If we are not sanctified*, [that is, observe, *although* we are justified, or *accounted righteous*,] *we are* in a state of nature, and all are "*by nature children of wrath*." Here we have a sad specimen, indeed, said Job, of insane imputations against God. We are here informed that God regards *a man as righteous before he is sanctified*, that is, (it is further said,) *while* his understanding is yet darkened, and he is incapable of loving any thing good, and to crown all, it is actually said, that he is regarded as "*righteous*," and as "*a child of wrath*," **AT THE VERY SAME TIME!** Now what should we say of an earthly judge who should *account* a culprit to be innocent *while he knew him to be guilty*? Should we not regard him as an idiot, or as something worse? And should we think that he mended the matter, if he alleged in his defence,

that he imputed to the culprit some other person's righteousness, and *therefore* pronounced *him* righteous? Truly what dreadful inundations of pestilential falsity and folly flow forth from *this* "Religious (!) Tract Society!"

Job could not but see, however, that it is only upon the principle of the doctrine of *imputed* righteousness, that the assertion of the efficacy of a death-bed repentance is at all defensible; because this doctrine contrives the only method by which the total want of *personal* righteousness can be supplied in a moment! He therefore wondered that this doctrine was not enforced by the Baptists, as the only proper foundation for believing their favourite doctrine of the efficacy of a death-bed repentance. Sometimes, when Job enquired, "How can a man *without holiness* see the Lord?" his mouth was stopped with the remark, "*Remember the crucified thief!*" But Job had a thinking, discriminating mind, and by the "two thieves" he understood (with some of the best writers on Divinity) two *political* offenders against the Roman power, which artfully stigmatised those who resisted its tyranny with the opprobrious epithet translated "thieves." He reasonably concluded that the "*penitent thief*" *must have been, previously* to his transgression, whatever that may have been, a disciple of Jesus, for he could not possibly judge from the appearances presented at the crucifixion, that his fellow-sufferer was actually the Lord of heaven and earth! the possessor of a spiritual "kingdom!" Job saw that while some of the disciples were looking for a temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke by the Messiah, this "malefactor" was wiser than they, for he discerned and gloried in a spiritual redemption. Job saw from the New Testament records, also, that the faith of this individual, for spirituality and clearness, far outstripped that of the Apostle Thomas. Our friend therefore concluded that whatever the fault was for which he had been convicted, it was not "*a sin unto death*," or a sin destructive of spiritual life in the soul (See 1 John, v. 17); for *if it had been*, he was quite sure that Jesus would not have admitted him to heaven, and which, indeed, he could not do, consistently with his own numerous and express declarations. Job remembered that He who said, "*This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*," had previously

said, "*Where I am, there shall also MY SERVANT be.*"—Hence he concluded that the penitent malefactor was really a *servant* of that Lord who promised him an abode with Himself. It is in vain to say that the Lord Jesus probably revealed to this penitent, at the time of his crucifixion, who He was, not merely by word of mouth, but also by such a testimony of the Holy Spirit in his conscience as was irresistible. The supposition that the Lord did then preach to, or *instruct* his fellow-sufferer is perfectly gratuitous, the narrative affording no countenance to any such supposition. The notion of an actual change of character commencing in the penitent at that moment, in consequence of the instruction *assumed* to have been then given, is consistent only with the Calvinistic belief, that God *willed* to convert that malefactor by his irresistible grace, but not to convert the other. But how is this reconcilable with the declaration that "God is no respecter of persons?" It is far more consistent with probability, as well as with the true Scripture doctrine of repentance, that the penitent had been previously instructed in the Gospel, and that the impenitent malefactor had not; also, that the one had been a good man (with errors of infirmity), while the other had not. But it may be said that the penitent confessed himself to be a sinner, to which it is sufficient to reply,—Who is not a sinner? The best man will always see his sins in the strongest light, because he regards them with the greatest abhorrence.

Our friend also examined the doctrine relating to the "fallen angels," as set forth by the Baptists in article 7, and he saw abundant reason to conclude, that this doctrine has no *real* foundation in the Scriptures, but is almost, if not entirely, to be regarded as a fiction of the poet Milton.\* It is said in that article, "That some of the angels rebelled against God, and are consigned to everlasting woe, hopeless." When Job came into the light of the New Christian Church he reasoned thus: "God is all-good, and all-wise, and everything he does, is done in the *best* way, and consequently with Him, there cannot be *two best* ways, for that

\* On this subject see the question largely treated in Mr. Noble's admirable "*Apparal*," Sect. vi, Part ii

would imply a contradiction. We are told that He made *angels* in his own image, perfect in wisdom, goodness, and happiness, and placed them in heaven; that he subjected them to no previous trial or probation; and that to those who fell, He gave no opportunity for repentance. But how differently God, we are told, has dealt with man! We are told that He made *man* in his own image, *but altogether in another manner*; giving to him a progressive nature, and making him subject to trial and probation upon earth, and when he fell, tenderly inviting him to repent, and to return to holiness and happiness. I cannot think it consists with his Infinite goodness, said Job, to deal *so differently* with creatures *who, as rational and immortal beings equally bearing his own image, are essentially* of the same nature; nor can I see how it consists with his Infinite wisdom to choose *two different BEST WAYS* (!) of accomplishing the purposes of his goodness! How can a MAN *truly* declare that God is infinitely good to *Him*, while he thinks that angels are more favoured than himself, by their not having been submitted to any probationary trial? How can any one conscientiously say, that God is infinitely good to the *fallen angels* who are plunged "in hopeless woe," while *to them* He gives no space to repent, although this boon is so freely extended to man? If there were BUT ONE rational creature to whom God is *not* infinitely good, it would be absolutely *untrue* to say that He is *infinitely* good at all! No one can *truly* say that God is infinitely good, unless he sincerely believes that God has dealt so bountifully *with himself*, according to the order and capacity of his nature, that he could not possibly have done more for his *real* good than he has done; yea, unless he is convinced, that it is out of God's power to be more kind and good than He has been, and is; for to be so would imply that there may be a degree of kindness and goodness beyond that which is infinite! Besides, Job saw that a certain spiritual being who was called in the Scriptures an angel, declared himself to have been one of the prophets, and consequently he declared that he had *once been a man* upon earth (Rev. xxii. 9); and from this, and other evidences, our friend concluded, that angels are *not* a distinct race from men, but that all angels *were once good men*; and all evil spirits, or devils, *were once wicked men*.

And as for Satan, the supposed leader of the rebellious angels, Job was amazed when he first began to reflect upon the subject, to find, that *Trinitarians* actually represent him to have become possessed *through, or in consequence of his fall*, of such infinite attributes as belong to God alone, and such as no one ever thought of attributing to this supposed archangel *before* he rebelled! No one pretends to say that Satan before his shameful fall was possessed of the attributes of Omniscience and Omnipresence, and Job could not see how his fall could put him in possession of them; or how it could be followed by the astonishing effect of his becoming the possessor of Divine, and therefore incommunicable and infinite powers! He could not see how the ingratitude and rebellion of Satan could *induce* God to invest him with these *divine* attributes, even if it were possible for God thus to create another god, and that god—a Devil! Neither could he see how Satan could overpower Omnipotence, and seize upon God's own attributes against God's will, and thus by force, or fraud, make himself equal with God, except, indeed, his Goodness! and able to contest the power of the Almighty Himself! It is in vain to object in reply, that no religious teacher has ever distinctly ascribed divine attributes to the Devil, for this is done with equal effect so long as *all teachers* unite in declaring, that the Devil is, or may be, *present with every one upon earth, without exception, and at the same moment*; and that *he knows all the weak points of every one with whom he is present*; and this whether he be a child of God, or a child of the Devil! and, also, how every one may be wrought upon most effectually, in order to his eternal injury! If this be not virtually and practically to set forth the Omnipresence and Omniscience, and thus *the doctrine of the Divinity of the Devil*, it would be difficult to say what else it is! Whatever may be meant by the Devil and Satan, in Scripture, said Job, this certainly cannot be the meaning intended to be conveyed to man by the Author of the Scriptures, while they expressly confine the possession of Omnipresence and Omniscience to God only, and declare that He will not give this, his incommunicable glory to another.

When Job had become a member of the New Church, he regarded it as a painful consideration, that while the



strongest argument for the Deity of Jesus Christ is the decided ascription to Him in the Holy Word of the attributes of Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence, the two latter divine attributes are, without any warrant of Scripture, (when reasonably interpreted,) *ascribed to the Devil* (!), not indeed in express words, but quite as effectually in practice, by the manner in which Trinitarian Christians speak of his power, and the universality of his operation. It is wonderful that they do not perceive, that such an ascription is tantamount to making a god of this supposed leader of the armies of hell! Job also clearly perceived, from numerous Scripture testimonies, that the Devil and Satan are names by which evil spirits, taken in the aggregate, are *personified*; and thus he avoided the sad error of attributing Divinity to the Devil, at the same time that he closely adhered to the Scripture. He then used to refer to Mark v. 1—9, as establishing the reasonableness of this view: and he also remembered that while the evangelists frequently describe the Lord as going about *casting out devils* (in the plural number), an Apostle, referring to *the same* transactions, says, that the Lord healed “all that were oppressed of *the Devil*” (Acts x. 38), shewing that, in his view, by the devil is meant all evil spirits, both individually and collectively, who had been engaged in oppressing mankind.

Another portion of the Baptist Confession, Job found to be irreconcilable with the general and accurate belief, that the spirits of the good, after death, go to heaven; and the spirits of the wicked, to hell. Article 23 says, “There is a time approaching *when all the dead shall arise from their graves*, and shall stand before the Lord Jesus Christ: *this* judgment, and the rewards or punishments consequent upon it, will be according to our works.” I might reasonably conclude from this statement, said our friend, that the Baptists deny the immortality of the soul, but that their preaching supplies the deficiency in their confession of faith. It is clear, however, from their preaching, that they believe that every man will undergo *two* judgments hereafter; the first, as a spirit, before he is consigned to heaven or hell; and the second, as a resuscitated dead body. It is

t, however, clearly stated, whether *the spirit* is to be *lged over again* in the resuscitated body, or whether the *dy* is to be judged *by itself* for the acts it performed at *e bidding* of its spirit! But surely no one who ventures open the eyes of his mind can fail to see the absurdity of *pposing* that the all-knowing God, the unchangeable and *st God*, will submit human beings to two trials, in order *ice* to declare their guilt, or their acquittal! What possible utility can arise from a *second* trial? It appears as if *e trial* of any one individual spirit after death is not *ought* sufficiently imposing, and so it is necessary to have a tremendous day,"—"a grand assize;"—it *appears* to *e thought* that the fear of a future *individual* judgment *ill* not be sufficiently operative, and so a great day of *neral* judgment is announced in addition, as being more *rifying* to sinners! But truly, what possible use can be *signed* to this second judgment, beyond that of making *imposing* spectacle or grand demonstration, it is difficult *see*! If at this alleged day of judgment, the souls of *riads* of the good will have been in heaven for ages, and *e souls* of the wicked in hell, it follows, that *before* they *re sent* to their respective destinations, they must have *en severally* judged to heaven or to hell "according to *eir works*," by an *irreversible* decree of unerring and *un-*changeable Wisdom. If, then, this judgment is, in the *ry nature* of things, irreversible, what purpose can be *swered* by the souls of both the good and the bad being *dged over again*, merely because their dead bodies have *en raised* to life again?—that is, supposing the dead *dies* of men ever will be raised,—a notion, be it remem-*red*, which the immortal Locke declared to have no *undation* in Scripture! Can it be supposed possible that *y new issue or decision* different from the former decrees *the Divine Judge* can turn up at this second judgment? *r* is it necessary that the *first* judgment having been *ected* by "God the *Father*," (as is generally supposed,) is judgment must be *revised* by "God the *Son*," who, as *e Baptist Confession* says, "is appointed of the Father *terally*, not figuratively] to judge the world, and who *ill* be [*literally*] seated on a glorious throne for that pur-*pose*!"—If there be no danger to the soul that has been so

long in heaven, of being sent, by a reversed sentence, to hell; and no chance, or hope, that the soul that has been so long in hell, can have its judgment reversed, and be raised to heaven, what becomes of all the *pulpit declamation* concerning this "tremendous day"?—a day upon which nothing—absolutely nothing—hinges! Surely there must be something wrong here, said Job; something must be wanting to clear up this great mystery, or rather this palpable contradiction! Who *can imagine* a beatified spirit which has been for ages enjoying, in the highest and purest state of its being, the felicities of heaven, as being brought down from thence, and thrust into its dead fleshly body again, in order to go through the empty form of a mere make-believe trial, the issue of which was anticipated with certainty ages of ages previously? What is this trial but a mockery and a farce, if no reversal of the former judgment can possibly take place? This surely cannot be the "last judgment" of the Scriptures! It never can be meant that a condemned spirit is to receive a respite from his torments (See Luke xvi.), by being brought out of hell in order to undergo a *second* trial, which must, of necessity, be exactly the same as that which was decided ages of ages before;—the same in its testimony, in its verdict, in its sentence, and in its consequences! Can any reasonable man say that such a judgment as this is any thing more than the "shadow of a shade?"

Those who are materialists, and who deny the immortality or separate existence of the soul, may with perfect consistency believe, that when dead bodies are raised up, they will then be conducted to judgment, because such persons believe that the body is the man, and the man is the body. It appears clear enough, that if consistency is to be maintained, either materialism must be adopted; or the reiterated or second judgment must be given up: either the soul is immortal and the supposed second judgment is a fallacy; or the soul is *not* immortal, and man cannot be judged at all until his body shall be raised from the dead. But is the body really to rise again? If so, it cannot be true that "*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,*" as stated by the Apostle Paul; for the body is flesh and blood, and cannot possibly be transmuted into a

body which is *not* flesh and blood. The Apostle declares (1 Cor. xv. 44), that there IS a spiritual body,—not that there *shall be* one at the last day, after the natural body has been turned into a spiritual one, but that there IS NOW a spiritual body, and that it is *this* body which shall be raised from the dead, or separated at death from the body in which it dwelt while the body was living. But there is no need to dwell upon the doctrine of the resurrection of the *natural* body, because it is one which has no *practical* bearing when the immediate resurrection of the spirit after death is believed. For when to *this* belief is added the conviction, that immediately after the spirit shall be raised up into the world of spirits, it will be adjudged to eternal happiness, or eternal misery, according to the deeds done in the body, then ALL the practical benefit arising from the belief of a future state of retribution is realized; and the additional belief that the dead body will be raised up too, can add nothing whatever that has the least bearing upon a Christian's life and conduct.\*

When our friend became a member of the New Church, he saw that the earth never will be destroyed, and that this must be acknowledged to be the true doctrine of the Scripture, when a just discrimination is made between figurative statements, and declarations obviously meant to be taken literally. It is said by the Psalmist, and also by Solomon, distinctly, that the sun, moon, and earth will endure for ever, (Ps. lxxii. 17; lxxviii. 69; lxxxix. 36, 37; cxlviii. 6; Eccl. i. 4); it is likewise declared that the kingdom of the Messiah upon earth will be everlasting; that the "New Jerusalem" will descend *to earth* from heaven, and that therein the Lord will reign *for ever and ever* (Dan. ii. 44; Rev. xi. 15; xxi. 2); which expressions necessarily imply the perpetuity of the earth†. Whenever, then, the Scriptures

\* Those, however, who desire to see this subject treated largely may consult Mr. Noble's *Appeal*, section iii.

† That the *Last Judgment of the Scriptures* was not to be accomplished in the natural world, but in the spiritual world, is proved in the "*Appeal*," section iv. part i. ii.; and that the statements concerning the burning up of heaven and earth, denote states of mind in the men of the church at that time, is proved in section ii.

appear to speak of the destruction of the visible heavens and earth, they are to be understood figuratively, as meaning the spiritual destruction of the inward and outward things of the church, which are the things of charity and faith, and of worship grounded therein. (See Acts ii. 16—20.)

Job thought that the statement in the 24th Article of the Baptist Confession, that "the wicked must for ever *groan beneath the vengeance of God*," places God in a very repulsive light; he could not but see that to represent the all-righteous Governor of all things as punishing from a vindictive motive, places Him even beneath a just and patriotic human judge, and, therefore, that such a representation must needs be highly derogatory to his character and dignity! How, indeed, can it consist with the declaration of John, that "*God is love*?" or with the declaration of David, "*Unto thee, O Jehovah, belongeth MERCY; for thou renderest to every man [whether he be good or whether he be evil,] according to his work*?" (Ps. lxii. 12). From the latter declaration, especially, it is clear that the Lord's mercy is *indeed* over all his works, as the Scripture in another place declares; and that the condemnation of the wicked, and the salvation of the good, alike originate in the Divine Mercy. And were we wise enough to trace these dispensations to their true sources, we should see that the lost in hell, wretched as they are, would be even more grievously tormented, were they to be brought forth into the intense glories and purities of the immediate Divine Presence, which, to their *opposing state*, instead of being a genial "*Sun of righteousness*," would prove a "*consuming fire*!" Our friend could not believe that his heavenly Father could possibly be a punisher, and still less a punisher in vengeance,—the fierce executioner of his own vindictive decrees! He found many passages in Scripture which convinced him that evil is *its own* punishment, and to this all experience seemed to add its testimony. Hence he concluded that, although the torment of the wicked is most direful, it is nothing but the necessary consequence, and the bitter fruit, of their own doings; and that the outpouring of God's "*vengeance*," when mentioned in Scripture, is only a figure of speech, and is not to be construed literally, but is to be interpreted as meaning the intensity

of the torments which the wicked in hell *inflict upon themselves and upon one another*, and which, owing to the insanity of their perverted judgment, they attribute to the unchangeably merciful God and Father of all! Hence he justly concluded, that it is in accommodation to the perverted perceptions of mankind that the statement is made according to the appearance, because, if the genuine truth had been openly stated, merely natural men would have been injured by it, by being confirmed in their unbelief; for what is contradictory to the natural perceptions is rejected at once by the sensually-minded.

When our friend glanced over the contradictions in doctrine which he had detected in the Trinitarian systems, he could not help thinking that the bare statement of them must be sufficient to awaken the slumbering judgment of thinking and candid minds; and yet, on maturer reflection, he was moved to exclaim,—I have little hope that any allegations of contradiction in doctrine, however well-founded they may be, will have any weight with those who regard religion as being altogether an impenetrable mystery, and who therefore feel themselves at liberty to add, invent, and put forth any fresh contradictions which may suggest themselves, perceiving that they can do so with impunity, because whatever they advance will probably pass without examination, and escape observation, under the capacious and darkly-shadowing cloak of mystery. In existing “Evangelical” systems of religion, contradictions are naturally expected, and even looked for, as inseparable from that character of mystery which is deemed at once the badge and the glory of orthodoxy. Hence it comes to pass, that when religious paradoxes are presented, they are perceived as things homogeneous, and it is not their presence, but the absence of them, which causes a sense of want or deficiency; for, on the contrary, no sooner does coherent truth present itself, than it awakens feelings of alarm and consternation, like a bright and unexpected light striking suddenly upon the weak and diseased vision of an individual, who has long used himself to the congenial and protecting veil of darkness! There being no *intellectual* standard to determine the truth or falsehood of what is unintelligible, each person is left at liberty to exercise his

imagination without fear of detection, and each, as if by mutual consent, agrees to listen to the other's tale of mystery, without criticism or question! And with equal unanimity do the lovers of mystery unite their efforts to put down any rash individual who should presume to disturb their day-dreams, and to urge upon them the duty, as well as the expediency, of opening the eyes of their reason, and of meeting, with a grateful welcome, the light which is shining around them. Wo to the presumptuous individual who should dare to tell them, that they cannot discern this light so long as their eyes are kept closed in the mental sleep which is induced upon them by the darkness and weight of the cloud of mystery in which they are enveloped! They will instantly regard him as approaching to rob them of their undefinable, and therefore imaginary wealth!

Where all is mystery and contradiction, no contradiction can be too large for the capacity of credulous faith! No one ever thinks of trying, or of asking himself what it is that he hears, or whence it is, or what it means. It is quite enough that he hears it, and that while he hears it, it steals drowsily over his apprehension; for if it awakens no sense of pain by exciting to the least intellectual exertion, it is then regarded as possessing the grand sign and mark of orthodoxy,—and—down it goes! But should a coherent proposition be presented, and therefore one that would appeal to a principle of the mind not usually awakened in connexion with religious subjects, namely, *a thinking principle of the understanding*, immediately the pain occasioned to the indolent habit of the powers of thought, gives notice of the danger with which orthodoxy is threatened, and moves the enfeebled judgment to sound an alarm, that heterodoxy is at hand! and immediately all the powers and passions of *the will* are roused to chase away, and if possible exterminate, the enemy of intellectual indolence and self-complacency! And as for the man who dares to speak intelligibly concerning faith in the ears of orthodox believers, he is condemned without further ceremony, as the enemy of the Gospel, and the slayer of immortal souls! But he who puts forth his incomprehensible propositions with a due degree of awfulness of manner, and *peculiarity* of tone, and thus induces sweet leaden sensa-

is over the understanding; who at the same time arouses feelings inordinately, and holds down their natural guide guard, the judgment; this,—this is the man, who is named the favoured of God, and his words,—empty and meaning as they are,—are valued “as the dew of Hermon, which descended upon the mountains of Zion!” He holds no prejudices, he disturbs no partialities, he excuses the labour and pain of *real* activity of thought by degrading reason as a false guide, and insinuating that the more rational a proposition *appears*, the more false it is, must be, in reality. Such is the man who is regarded by the multitude as a religious friend, and a safe guide! to *what* is he a friend? To what but dulness and heaviness of intellect, and a drowsy stupor of the rational powers? He is a friend to all that chains down the immortal mind in darkness, under the pretence of raising it to the mountain of light! Certain it is, however, that such friends are these are worthy of those Protestant Reformers who commenced their work by endeavouring to put out the vital eyes of their adherents, that so they might lead them alive hither and thither, at their will. Thus an early issue of the “Evangelical Magazine” heartily commended the following comments of Martin Luther on the apostle’s declaration that “faith is the evidence of things not seen;” and from this commendation our friend felt warranted in concluding that it is the opinion of “Evangelicals,” as well as of Luther, that the great use of preaching the Gospel *arises from its not being understood by hearers*, and that the less they understand, the more they are benefited! Luther says, “The nature of the Christian faith requires the preaching of the doctrine of faith. Faith has to do with things *not seen*; and this is of the highest degrees of faith,—steadfastly to believe that God is *infinitely* merciful, though he saves but few, condemns so many; and that he is strictly just, though, *in his own will*, he *makes* such numbers of mankind *necessarily* liable to damnation. Now *these are some of the unseen things of which faith is the evidence*; whereas, it is in my power, to *comprehend* them, or clearly to make how God is both inviolably just [in *making* such numbers liable to damnation!] and infinitely merciful, notwith-



standing the display of wrath, and seeming inequality in his dispensations respecting the reprobate, *faith would have nothing to do*. But now, *since these matters cannot be comprehended by us, there is room for the exercise of faith!* The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches, should be taught and published. They, no less than the other mysteries of Christian doctrine, being proper objects of faith on the part of God's people."\* Such is the Protestant standard of the efficacy of an incomprehensible faith! But I think, nevertheless, said Job, that there are not many well educated Protestants in our day, who would not be rather shy of coming up to this standard; few would venture to say that Luther has not burlesqued the apostle's description of faith; and still fewer would consent to predestination being preached without reserve, seeing that the spirit of the age is against it, for even merely natural light directly leads to its condemnation. However, Evangelicals delight as much as Luther in the incomprehensibility of the things to be believed, whether they agree with him in his sense of the apostle's words or not. But I wonder what they would find to say in support of their notion that the value of faith arises from the things believed *not being understood*, when the following words of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they call their Master, are set before them: "*When any one heareth the Word of the kingdom, and UNDERSTANDETH IT NOT, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side*" (Matt. xiii. 19). And what can be more like seed sown on the hard trodden way side, than unintelligible contradictory doctrines, which cannot possibly be penetrated by the least degree of intellectual light, and so be raised into the understanding? And what can be more like the impenetrable way side than the prejudiced understanding, which refuses to admit the least seed of truth? In the one case, the understanding *cannot* admit what it professes to believe, because it is unintelligible;

\* This passage is taken from Luther's *Answer to Erasmus*, entitled "*De Servo Arbitrio*," translated in Haweis's Church History, vol. ii. p. 392.

and in the other, it *will not* admit what it might understand, because self-will is suffered to exclude it, it having been fully and finally determined, that the understanding shall be kept in obedience to faith. Never can unintelligible, contradictory doctrines be received *into the constitution of a religious judgment*, because they cannot possibly penetrate the understanding. They can only find a place without, in the memory, where they lie, as it were, close to the lips, whence they come forth like words from the mouth of a parrot, unprofitable to the utterer, and equally unprofitable to the hearer! Such being the case, in respect to the palatableness of contradictions, I fear, said Job, that however weighty the objection of the contradictoriness of a doctrine may be with me, it will have but little force, if any, with decided Evangelicals, because they have made up their minds to believe what passes for orthodox, and to keep their understandings, in religious respects, "without form and void," in defiance of all the principles of knowledge, the facts of experience, and the plainest dictates of common sense! It is as much in vain to argue with a mind which has acquired the vitiated taste of relishing religious contradictions, and the habit of appropriating them without nausea, as it is to remonstrate with a person who has acquired a liking for a filthy weed or drug, and to urge the vileness of the object with which his appetite is delighted!

Returning once more to the Confession of the General Baptists, and adverting again to the floating uncertainty and indefiniteness of idea in that body, concerning the nature and person of the Christian Redeemer, Job thought that the heathen deity, *Janus*, offered an apt illustration of this state of things. The statue of this idol was represented as looking two ways at once;—and thus truly it is with the New Connexion of General Baptists! One party amongst them looks through the thick fog of Trinitarianism towards the orthodox Romish church with which the doctrine of three co-equal Divine Persons originated; while the other party looks through the black Arian mist towards the thick darkness of Unitarianism! When our friend first joined the "new connexion," for a time he turned his face in the direction of the *first party*; but at length he turned round, and looked

in the direction of the *latter* party; and then, as he was a straight-forward man, and perceived that the line of demarkation between Arianism and Unitarianism is altogether an imaginary one,—a mere non-entity, he naturally moved onward in his new course, till at length he stepped over its supposed place, quitted the ranks of the General Baptists, and became a decided Unitarian. And how could he do otherwise? For what essential or real difference is there between Arianism and Unitarianism? What *essential* or *real* difference is there between believing that the Son of God is the most dignified of *created* beings, and believing that he was the *most virtuous* of *men*? What *essential* difference can exist between the two *created* and *finite* individuals respectively called “Master” by Arians and Unitarians?—However differently the two may be described, they are still creatures, and nothing more. And this truly is all the difference between *Arianism* and *Unitarianism*,—a difference which amounts really to nothing! When both are viewed from the ground of *conscience*, the Arian has the advantage; but when seen from the ground of *intellectual consistency*, the Unitarian has it. The Arian conscientiously tries to keep close to the letter of Scripture;—the Unitarian boldly impugns it, and recklessly departs from it! The Arian cannot stifle the demands of conscience which call upon him to keep a *little closer* to the *plain* and *too* evident meaning of Scripture than the Unitarian does; he is obviously the more scrupulous of the two. But, considering Arianism *merely* as an *intellectual system*, it is nothing better than a *shuffling* kind of Unitarianism! The Arian may, perhaps, defend himself by saying, that he believes that the Son of God was *in some way* invested with a *derived* and *separate* Divinity, so that he is able, as he persuades himself, to confess His Divinity with perfect sincerity; but it is a sincerity, however, which when fairly analyzed amounts only to this, that what is called divine *in words*, *in thought* is regarded as a mere creature! It is with equal sincerity that *some* Unitarians confess the *Divinity* (*not the Deity*) of Jesus, by resorting to a kind of dishonest mental reservation, meaning all the while the divinity of *his mission*! But why do they not also confess the divinity of *Moses*, because of

the divinity of *his mission*? The answer is plain,—too plain,—*It would not answer their purpose!*

In the Unitarian faith, our friend thought he had found a final place of refuge. His religious belief was then, as he thought, all very rational, and quite consistent with itself. He believed that there is One invisible God, and that He adopted as His own Son a certain man named Jesus, born, as he believed, of Joseph and Mary, and made him a great prophet; he also believed, that by observing the *teaching* of this great prophet, mankind may be redeemed from ignorance and vice! Certainly there existed no contradiction of doctrine in this belief; and the new creed had, besides, the great merit (in the eyes of some) of being very short, and very simple. Unitarians, while they rejoice in the vastness of the fields of science, as containing within them exhaustless mines of delightful discovery, rejoice, also, that all that can be known of religious DOCTRINE, or respecting points of BELIEF, *can be learned in half an hour!* and then, so far as *faith*, or the *understanding* is concerned, *religion is done with*, and man is at liberty to pursue his studies amongst worldly objects, or to direct his activities in furtherance of secular or moral purposes. However, the Unitarian has the advantage of the Trinitarian *in this respect*, that the study of the former to understand religious doctrine is *soon over*, because the Unitarian system is soon understood; while the Trinitarian's study of religious doctrine *never can begin*, inasmuch as he candidly confesses at the outset, that *true* religious doctrine is an *unintelligible* mystery, and that it is of no use to attempt to understand it; for the learned and the unlearned, the minister and the hearer, are all alike in the dark! But is the knowledge of God really so soon learnt as the one asserts; or is it never to begin or to be learnt at all, as the other asserts? Happy is he who finds that, when the Scriptures are rightly interpreted, all the alleged mysteries are cleared up, and a boundless field for delightful and edifying contemplation is opened to the view of the "meek and lowly in heart!" Such, without question, is the inestimable privilege of the citizens of the "Holy city, New Jerusalem!"

There was one thing in his Unitarian associates which gave our friend real and well-grounded satisfaction;—he found that they not only believe that man is to be judged *according to his works*, but they also act upon, and carry out such belief, by bearing in mind that their obtaining the favour of God depends *entirely* on their moral character being formed in accordance with the Gospel. He perceived that they did not entertain the nonsensical idea of meriting heaven by their works, as is so frequently and so falsely imputed to them; he saw that they did their duty as in the sight of God, and in order that their minds and characters might be formed into an orderly and heavenly state. Perhaps, in cultivating moral qualities, some few persons amongst them *might* think of their own power to do so as arising from something inherent in themselves, but he found that in general they devoutly acknowledged the presence of God with all who desire it, affording them both illumination and strength to serve him “acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.” Job rejoiced to see the happy fruits of making the “*wisdom*” of leading a good life “*the principal thing*,” and of pursuing it in order to obtain that favour of God which is identical with salvation. He rejoiced to see amongst them men of upright, honourable, and manly principles; and of humane, generous, and kind feelings. He could not but think that moral culture is in higher esteem amongst them than amongst Trinitarians, and that a larger and more comprehensive view of moral principles and obligations is taken by them, than with those who *too consistently* seek for salvation *by faith ALONE*, without troubling themselves about charity, and the holy family of moral duties involved in it, according to the plain and express teaching of Paul (in 1 Cor. xiii.). But our friend, after he quitted the Unitarians, saw reason to conclude that the belief entertained by them, that man is not a fallen creature, is strangely contradictory to experience, and that it has a tendency to nurture pride, and to lead some to “*glory in their shame*.”

Our friend Job, however, never felt quite settled in the Unitarian faith, having a conscience whose dictates he was not accustomed to silence, and being habituated to the

perusal of the Scriptures, and being also well acquainted with their contents, he could not but feel startled, at times, on perceiving the utter disagreement between positive declarations of Holy Writ, and the affirmations contained in his short, rational, and consistent religious faith! What then should he do? was his natural inquiry. He felt bewildered, for a time; but he learned gradually, from his new associates, and their publications, that if patience could not succeed in untying the Gordian knot of Scripture interpretation,—why—positiveness might cut it! He felt some repugnance, at first, to adopt interpretations of Scripture which his conscience told him were unnatural, far-fetched, strained, and according to no fair or certain rule. He saw that they were the production of intellectual ingenuity, and never could have been arrived at by the simple in heart, and the straight-forward judgment of those “in whom is no guile!” He could not but sometimes fear, that the meaning adopted was not the meaning intended! But “evil communications corrupt good manners.” By degrees, the whole of Scripture bearing on the question relative to the Person of Jesus Christ was put to the torture. One nail was driven in after another, until the crucifixion of the Son of Man was completed! It did not then occur to him, that *all the points* of the faith of Unitarians, as professing *Christians*, are attained from *a very few passages* in the New Testament; and that the chief part of their doctrinal instruction consists in the art of making all the other doctrinal passages agree with these few, by forcing upon them a strange sense, or depriving them of all the ideas which they naturally and obviously suggest,—or else leaving them, and taking no notice of them at all, on the ground that they are too mysterious to build any conclusion upon. Such a system of interpreting as forces ideas upon, instead of drawing ideas from Scripture, especially if the forced ideas turn the passages so interpreted into trifling, needless, no-meaning expressions, is a kind of enchantment, or intellectual chemistry, by which substantial objects are converted into airy nothings. The upright interpreter, the humble and sincere disciple, has no favorite doctrinal passages whatever. He knows that *every passage*, from such an origin as Divine Wisdom Itself, must needs be *equally*

necessary and contributive to a *complete* religious system. He feels that every one is a messenger from God to man, and that every one ought to be allowed, therefore, to deliver its own message from the Most High. To that message, he feels himself bound to listen, with devout and reverential attention; hoping and trusting, through the merciful aid of its Divine Author, that he may not mistake its import, and thus miss the benefit intended *for him*. It is thus that the member of the *New Church* deals with the Holy Volume. He has no favorite passages. Those which declare the entire dependence of Jesus upon God, are as necessary to the establishment of *his* creed, as those which declare him to be the Eternal Father brought forth to view, and therefore one with the Father, so that to see Him when He was in the world was to see the Father. (See John i. 18; x. 30; xiv. 9.) But to our friend Job Abbott.

In order to induce himself to take such liberties, as are usual amongst Unitarians, with that sacred book which he had heretofore regarded as *divine* in its contents as well as in its origin, it was necessary that our friend should *lower* his ideas and standard of *divine inspiration*. He began, therefore, to think of the Bible, after the manner of Unitarians, as a very ancient, curious, and valuable book, the contents of which, however, from its frequent transcriptions by copyists before the era of printing, and from its having passed through the almost exclusive and suspicious hands of a corrupt priesthood, ought not to be regarded with implicit confidence, but ought to be taken with due caution, and received with but little reliance. Having assented to the parts being regarded as interpolated which declare the *miraculous conception* of Jesus Christ, it was not very difficult for him to lower or doubt the authority of any other part of the New Testament. Under this system, even the records of the miracles became suspected, instead of being regarded as the divinely constructed buttresses of the Christian faith. The demoniacal possessions, also, which so firmly establish the *necessity* for the redemption of mankind from the power of hell, came to be resolved into common diseases. Instead of contemplating with astonishment the awful fact, that a power extensively prevailed, by which evil spirits could possess men's minds and bodies at their

will, and exercise their malignant influences upon them; instead of deducing from this fact the necessity that the Creator of mankind should become their Redeemer, in order to avert their entire destruction; instead of marking and hailing that deliverance with devout gratitude and adoration, Job proceeded, under the tutoring of Unitarianism, to persuade himself that *no such* redemption was required; that these demoniacal possessions, however astonishing and unprecedented they appear in the Gospel Records, amounted, in reality, to nothing; and, in their consequences, were of no greater magnitude than a cold or a fever! It never occurred to him, that if the Redeemer had allowed the mischief to spread and become universal, the whole human race would have been destroyed, both as to soul and body. And that it was from this dreadful impending danger that man was delivered, and that this is the great Redemption for which man is bound to be eternally thankful! Job read in the New Testament that certain demoniacs were moved by supernatural agents, not in their own persons, but in the persons of those who impelled them to cry out, in strange agony, "*What have we to do with thee, Jesus, THOU SON OF GOD? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*" And such is the blinding influence of a predetermination to think with a party, that Job did not then perceive that no mere bodily disease could possibly be adequate to produce such an effect, or, in other words, could qualify "a madman" to know and declare a truth, which not even the apostles as yet clearly understood! But Job was induced by mere conjectures and perhaps to believe that these extraordinary and doubtless reluctant enunciators of the Messiah's advent, were nothing more than ordinary madmen! He did not perceive in this the strange meeting of the extremes of credulity and incredulity! He could find no ground for supposing an error had crept into the Gospel narrative, for it is given by no less than three out of the four Evangelists, (Matt. viii. 29; Mark v. 7; Luke viii. 28). He did not see that such manifest marks of a supernatural character in the possession of these men by demons, necessarily invest with a like character all the other cases of demoniacal possession! He found that amongst the professedly *rational* Unitarians



it was a favorite notion that the demoniacs were mere madmen, and that the circumstance of some of them extracting from their madness the means of becoming wiser than apostles, was only to be regarded as "a singular coincidence;" and in this favourite notion he, for a time, established himself. He had not then noticed the following words in one of the Gospels, "They brought unto Him those which were *possessed with devils*, AND those which were *lunatic*," (Matt. iv. 24); from which words alone it is plain that those who were possessed, and those who were lunatic, were persons of a perfectly distinct description.

Our friend was now taught to think that holy men of old, who spake by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *only so spake* when their sayings agreed with the short, rational, and consistent creed of Unitarians! Whenever he detected a discrepancy between their statements and his own prepossessions, after some little struggle of conscience, he learned to make them give way, concluding that they could not be right because Unitarians held a different opinion; they *must* mean something different, and so that meaning was accordingly fixed upon them! And thus "*the Word of God*" came to be regarded as nothing more than a high-sounding, complimentary title,—an empty name, and the divine book itself to be treated as a mere plaything of the capricious intellect, whereon to exercise a perverse ingenuity, under the impulse of pride, self-will, and self-derived intelligence!\*

\* *Rational* as the Unitarian creed appears, when viewed *separately* from the Scriptures, it is not felt to be quite so satisfactory by *honest* Unitarians themselves, when *taken in connexion* with that book from which it is professedly drawn. In a conversation the writer held in 1838 with the minister of a highly respectable Unitarian congregation in a large country-town, that gentleman candidly made the following declaration: "I CONFESS THAT I DO NOT UNDERSTAND CHRISTIANITY!" Let it not, however, be supposed that this individual is more favourable to any other Christian system than that which he publicly advocates. He conscientiously regards Unitarianism as the *best* of the forms of that *unintelligible* dispensation of Divine Truth called "Christianity"(!) and totally rejects the New Church doctrine

Subsequently, Job remarked that Unitarians are generally distinguished by a kind of *instinctive aversion to what is purely spiritual*, or what is called supernatural, or any thing which indicates a belief in the realities of a spiritual world. The tendency of all the mind's activities, with such Unitarians, appears to be outward and downward, arising partly from a mistrust in those interior and peculiarly human powers of perception which are in the light of heaven ; and partly from an excessive and misplaced confidence, upon *spiritual* or religious subjects, in the appearances and fallacies of which the sensual principle of the judgment is constituted, and which are in the light of the world. It is from this source that the constant Unitarian demand originates for sensible demonstration, even on subjects which can only be known, and seen, by an interior light and perception. It is owing to this outward and low tendency, that this sect is remarkable for its shyness of what ought to be the delight and glory of a religious and immortal being,—the great subject of the reality of a spiritual world,—and which it is the great object of the Scriptures to reveal. Hence come the doctrine of materialism, and a disbelief in the existence and immortality of the soul ; hence also the disbelief of the influences of good angels and evil spirits, although the belief in the *nearness* of the spiritual world, and of the *near* approach of the period when the soul's destination shall be fixed therein, is of such great moral efficacy ; and although the belief of the good influences of angels is so consolatory and delightful, and the belief of the evil influences of evil spirits so calculated to keep us on our guard, and thus to promote our spiritual and moral improvement.

concerning the Lord, as well as the Trinitarian system. But let not any short-sighted Trinitarian, or any believer in *only two* Divine persons, (a belief common amongst General Baptists,) too hastily exclaim, "What hypocrisy to pretend to teach what he cannot understand !" for how does the case of this gentleman differ from that of the believers of *two* or *three* Persons making up One God, and which *they* confess to be an impenetrable mystery ? The one stands up to teach what he *cannot* understand ; the other stands up to teach what he believes *cannot* be understood ! If one *be* a hypocrite, so must be the other.

At a subsequent period of his life, after he had entered the New Church, our friend was astonished that he could have adopted the Unitarian *profession* of reverence for the *virtues* of Jesus, on Unitarian principles, or while he regarded him as a mere man. He wondered that he did not perceive the arrogance which must be attributable to any mere man who should make himself God, by saying "*All things that the Father hath are mine.*" "*I am the Truth and the Life.*" "*He that seeth me seeth the Father.*" "*I and my Father are one.*" "*Without me ye can do nothing.*" "*Come unto me, and I will give you rest.*" "*If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*" "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" "*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*" "*Lo! I am with you even to the end.*" Job saw that the latter declarations actually lay claim to the divine attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence. Our friend was surprised that he could have failed to see that any mere man, who should thus arrogate to himself divine attributes, and take to himself the *personally incommunicable* powers of Deity, could have but little right to say, "*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart!*" He now saw that the plainest dictates of reason point to the conclusion, that Jesus was either God himself, or an arrogant pretender to be that which he was not, and consequently an impostor; he saw that there was no middle position or resting place between these two alternatives, for any man of a firm and uncompromising judgment.\*

\* The writer once put the following question to a distinguished Unitarian, who lately filled the highest civil office in one of the largest midland towns, and to which he was raised by the influence of his admirable talents, joined with his high civil and moral character:—"You say that Jesus Christ was, *by birth*, a mere man, and as perfectly distinct from the Eternal Father as either of us; but He Himself testified, after He was thirty years old,—*As the FATHER hath LIFE in HIMSELF, so hath He given to the SON to have LIFE in HIMSELF.*" Now I need not tell you that the phrase '*Life in Himself*,' means life possessed independently of any other being,—life underived,—self-essence and self-existence. If, then, Jesus was, at first, by birth of Joseph and Mary, a

Job Abbott, (now living at Loughborough,) had acquired, by this time, such a habit of licence in estimating and construing Scripture, and such a want of confidence in the Bible, which he now deemed merely a very old and much corrupted and interpolated book, that he was prepared for another downward change in religious opinion. The "free-thinking Christians" having set up their banner in the town, his unsettled mind was soon attracted to it. He found that they repudiated public worship, (owing to a mistaken interpretation of Matt. vi. 6,) and that on Sundays they did not meet to worship God in the usual way, but to debate and settle questions, either by an implied understanding or by vote, and so gradually to build up for themselves, as they thought, a temple of truth. This building was, however, destined to be planned and re-planned, and canvassed and altered, and was never to be deemed a finished work. Like those mentioned by the apostle, these inquirers were *"ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."* The views of the free-thinkers too well agreed with Job's present habits of theological speculation, and therefore he soon joined them; he hoped, also, by means of their Sunday debates, to clear up some points upon which he did not feel quite satisfied. He found the ideas entertained by his new associates concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to be those entertained by the

mere man, as you say, and was afterwards, as He expressly declares, *made 'Life in Himself,'* he then necessarily ceased to be a mere man; and in consequence of his being made life in himself, he must either have been resolved back again into the Divine Nature, or have become so united with the Essential Life as that He and the Father are one, as He also expressly declared. Hence it follows, that so long as this passage stands unimpeached, Unitarians cannot justify themselves in asserting that Jesus Christ is NOW a mere man, or that He is NOW individually separate from God, even granting that he was once so, when He was born into the world, and before He was made Life in Himself. *What say you to this objection to the Unitarian faith and worship?* "I say," was the reply, "that I do not understand the passage you refer to, and therefore I leave it, and frame my belief from those numerous passages which I consider plain and conclusive."—This answer is the natural result of the low standard of inspiration allowed by Unitarians to the sacred volume.

lowest Unitarians or "Humanitarians." He also found that they made more free with the Scriptures than any persons he had ever heard of, who did not absolutely reject them; and he found, likewise, that they were more generally materialists than were the Unitarians. He continued with them until, by the irreconcilable inconsistency of their conclusions at their debates, they had thrown his mind into complete confusion; and, indeed, from the same cause, the society was broken up at Loughborough, some of its members becoming sceptics, or, perhaps, deists, and others going back to the Unitarians. *Our friend Job was one of the former.* The free-thinkers had destroyed, at the same time, all his respect for the Scriptures as a really divine revelation, and all his capacity of thinking with satisfaction and comfort upon the various points of Christian doctrine. They had debated every Christian system which he was then acquainted with, *out of his grasp*; and had entirely removed all his confidence in the Scriptures as a book capable of "making him wise unto salvation\*!"

\* The Freethinkers are a very small body, but they number amongst them men of great commercial ability, wealth, and influence. Those who desire to see the *latest* pretensions of the "Freethinking Christians," alias "*The Only True Church of God*," may consult an article written by their founder, the late Mr. Thompson, of Holborn Hill, "On the unity and exclusiveness of the Church of God," printed in "*The Christian Reformer*," of February, March, and April, 1834. But it would be unfair to conceal that these pretensions were questioned *in print*, in a pamphlet *not published*, by a respectable member of their body, Mr. A. The following brief extracts from this disclaimer, are presented to the reader. Mr. A. remarks in his preface, "Amongst other things, our friend [Mr. T.] says, 'We have *discovered* that those who call themselves Christians have no claim to the exalted honour of being the Church of God.' 'None others but ourselves have claimed to be *the* Church of God.'" Mr. A. observes further, "Our friend [Mr. T.], it is well known, contends that our church is the *only* true church; that none but members of that church have any just ground for expecting that God will answer their prayers, for that all who are not in that church are in a state of rebellion against God." Subsequently objection is taken by Mr. A. to the following "*extraordinary passage*" of Mr. T. "It may be worth while here to remark a very striking coincidence. Various commentators upon the prophecies have computed that

If, then, Job was not a *decided* deist,—which he certainly was not,—it would be difficult to shew that he was anything else. His mind, harassed and without hope in either God or man, poured out its bitter and almost unceasing complaints against the hollowness and want of principle of those who are called Christians. In changing his opinion on *doctrinal* points, he had, nevertheless, held fast by the *moral* principles of the New Testament, and the only point which his religious migrations had firmly established in his mind was,—the inconsistency of the majority of Christians with the ten commandments! He had long agreed with the estimate of mankind in general, given by Cowper,

“ I sum up half mankind,  
And add two-thirds of the remaining half,  
And find the total of their hopes and fears  
Dreams, empty dreams!”

But he was now disposed, after his experience of the “religious world,” who formed Cowper’s favoured minority, to apply the same excerptive rule to that portion of mankind also, and thus to reduce the truly wise to *a sixth of a sixth* of the whole community!

the time when the woman, (i. e., the Church of God,) should come out of the wilderness, must be somewhere between 1789 and 1800. Let me remind you of the *curious fact*, that our laws, as *the laws* of the Church of God, were first published in print in 1800!!” “I believe that we are the light of the world for the present period.” Mr. T. afterwards speaks of *his* church as “*a select few*,” who are “purified channels to co-operate with Jesus, the fountain head, (under God,) at his *second coming*, in spreading and multiplying incessantly the streams of universal beneficence, through a future constitution of human society.” Mr. T. argues that the *Old Testament* Church might as properly be called the “Church of *Moses*,” as the *New* the “Church of *Christ* ;” that the assumption of the latter title by Christians proves that they are a false church, and not the Church of God, and that *his* church is *the ONLY* true Church of God! To all these arrogant and absurd pretensions Mr. A. objects with singular force and ability, contending that the “Freethinking Christians,” of which body he is a member, are only a part of the Universal Church of Christ; but whether *many* of that body agree with Mr. A., the writer is unable to determine.

As regards the advocates of justification by faith only, he did not much wonder at their moral condition and neglect of the commandments, when he reflected that, from a fear of being considered "legal" in their sentiments, or of being stigmatized as "workmongers," their preachers but seldom touched upon the commandments at all (except to depreciate them as being impracticable,) and he did not remember that the *golden rule* had ever once been adverted to, as an indispensable religious obligation, while he sat under their preaching!

With this experience, he could not but deeply feel, that it would be well for all religious professors if they could be brought to remember, that they can have *no just cause* for thinking of the body to which they belong as being holier than others, or more acceptable with God, *except upon this ground*, that, *more than others*, the members of their body highly esteem *moral culture*, and labour to grow wise in moral wisdom, by study, self-examination, and inward experience and observation, and also, so far as they attain such wisdom, faithfully bring it to bear upon every thought, incident, and action of their lives. If growth in moral virtue would inevitably result from cherishing and acting upon a deep sense of its necessity and worth, *as connected with salvation*, what must be the result of an *opposite course*?—that of trusting for acceptance with God entirely and exclusively to a particular mode of believing in the merits of Christ? what result but that which is continually presented to our view,—an indifference to the inward graces of charity, and a neglect of the cultivation of them, while only the more flagrant evils of life are avoided, because they would be deemed an evidence of a want of faith, or prove injurious to individual reputation or worldly interest? These latter considerations are, doubtless, very good in their place, and are not to be neglected, but goodness ought to be pursued in the *first* place, and purely *for its own sake*, and because it constitutes the image and likeness of God in the soul; and no one can pretend that *mere believing* can do this. Happily, some persons are much better than their creed, and, *in practice*, whatever their doctrinal profession may be, exhibit the enlarged, liberal, and universal spirit

of love, and appear, judging from their conduct, to be seeking salvation by joining a life of charity with faith, in obedience to their Master's words, "*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*" But whether such persons form a majority of professing Christians, or even a respectable minority, was a question which Job sometimes asked himself, and a question which experience compelled him to answer in the negative. Perhaps this conclusion may be thought illiberal and unjust; doubtless it will be so considered by all who measure the state of mankind by the miserable standard of orthodoxy or heterodoxy, and who call themselves, emphatically, believers, and real Christians, because they are of the orthodox faith? But let any truly honest man, who is well acquainted with the high moral standard of the Christian life, as prescribed in the Gospel, examine and try the moral worth of Christian professors by *that* standard, and he will find that Job's judgment was *not* illiberal, simply because it was just and true!

When, by means of the doctrines of the New Church, Job was enabled to discern clearly the springs of moral judgment, he was able to solve a problem which had often puzzled him, and that was, the opposite conclusions to which Christians arrive from reading the same divine book, and which book they nevertheless unite in declaring to be "the only standard of a Christian's faith and practice."—He saw that men use their understandings under the bias of their wills, and see with different eyes, because they are ruled by different affections; and that every man judges himself, others, books, and things, in a manner congenial to, and in conformity with, his ruling affection. He saw that the ruling affection, like a despotic monarch, attracts to itself whatever is pleasing to itself, and rejects and suffocates whatever is uncongenial. Hence he was able to see that a professedly religious man, who is in reality ruled by self-love, sees the contents of the Scriptures with totally different eyes from the man who is ruled by charity, that is, by a supreme regard to the divine will. For when the former character reads the Scriptures, his mind is in the false light of self-derived intelligence, kindled by the fire of self-love, and from this false light he eagerly seizes upon every thing



that he can turn to favour salvation by *faith alone* ; while all that favours charity, or inculcates the keeping of the commandments, scarcely affects his mental vision at all, or passes by it like a fleeting cloud, or like things seen in the night. On the contrary, the truly good man reads the Scriptures in the light of the Lord, from which he gives to every thing he reads its due and relative importance, and this because his purposes coincide with the object of the Scriptures, for he desires to mortify his self-love, and to join faith with charity, and charity with faith, by a life according to the divine commandments. Thus Job was led to see the meaning of the Lord's words, "*Every one that doeth evil hateth the light ; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light ;*" and also, "*If any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.*"

And when our friend looked back, he also recollected that he had noticed amongst the dissenters a good deal of diligence in reading the Scriptures, but very little desire to be taught by them ; that is, very little desire really and rationally to understand them. But this he perceived is consistent with their leading idea, that religion is an impenetrable mystery. Instead of understanding the Scriptures rationally, he saw they were contented with that dogmatical understanding of them which, although it generally passes for a right and real understanding, consists merely in passing by unnoticed all that does not bear on the favorite doctrine, and seizing upon that only which can be made to confirm it. Certainly this is nothing like approaching humbly to the Lord, and seeking instruction from Him through his Word ; it is more like dictating doctrine to the Divine Wisdom itself ! Others seemed to read as a mere formality, or because it is regarded as a duty, and this class, doubtless, profits by the reading of the Scriptures more than the other ; if not intellectually, yet in strengthening the sense of duty by acting according to it.

Job perceived also, that while the Trinitarian reads principally to establish his faith in the tripersonality, and in justification by faith in a vicarious sacrifice, the Unitarian reads principally, if not entirely, to invigorate his moral feelings, (not, however, without *hailing* by the way those passages which *seem* to prove that the Saviour was a mere

man); and the result of the two cases appeared to be this; that the general aspect of the *Trinitarian* religion presents an unintelligible faith united with a mutilated and depreciated moral practice, because springing from defective principles, and which are defective *because they reduce morality to insignificance* by not connecting it with salvation, while the *Unitarian* religion presents an intelligible, yet unscriptural and mutilated faith, joined with *a supremely cherished, yet too external* obedience to the divine law; good and complete, indeed, so far as it goes, but dead and cold for want of being connected with divine love, as manifested in the divine person of the Saviour, rightly and reverentially appreciated. And how can it be otherwise, when the sum and substance of the Trinitarian and Unitarian religion is as follows?

The Trinitarian religion (taught coldly by the generality of church-clergymen, and zealously by dissenters) amounts to this;—That God punished his Son in our place, and that he will save all who believe it, even at the hour of death, and without the observance of any one of his moral precepts. *In reading the Scriptures, then, what need is there that a Trinitarian should attend to anything but what relates to this faith, from which alone he expects to receive salvation?* Why should he attend to those practical precepts of justice, which are so palpably violated in the supposed vicarious sacrifice?

The Unitarian religion, on the other hand, amounts to this:—That God sent a new prophet, named Jesus Christ, to convey to men more perfect precepts of morality than were dispensed in the Old Testament, and also to die to prove his Apostleship; and that God will save all whose characters are formed upon the basis of those precepts. *What need, then, is there, in reading the Scriptures, that a Unitarian should pay any attention to mysterious things relating to faith, when the practical precepts alone stand connected with his hope of salvation?* Why should he attend to those doctrinals about the Father, Son, and Spirit, to which his cherished faith is so directly opposed?

Job rejoiced after he had entered the New Church, that he had now become possessed of a truly divine system of doctrine, which inseparably united faith and practice, by

paying an equal and zealous regard to both, grounded in a clear perception of their mutual relation and specific uses. Hence, in reading the Scriptures, whether a passage related to faith or practice, in his view it was equally important, instructive, and interesting; for every part of God's truth was equally dear to him, because he knew that every part conduced to perfect him in some particular respect, for which it was given.

Job's mind, after his separation from the Freethinkers, was completely open to the arguments of the enemies of Scripture, and also to any suggestions which might arise in his thoughts, to the disparagement of Revelation. He had not entirely discarded the Sacred Volume, but he determined to give it a more searching examination than he had yet done, and the better to guide his judgment to a right conclusion, he determined to make notes as he went on, which notes are now presented to the reader, as follows.

Gen. i. Comparing ver. 5 with 16, I cannot understand how light, and also day and night, could exist before the sun was created; it is like supposing the effect to precede the cause. Ver. 4. What can the separation of light from darkness mean, and the making of light out of darkness? Light and darkness cannot be mingled together; neither can they co-exist. I have no idea of night and day, but as being caused, as at present, by the light of the sun being obstructed by the body of the earth coming between the sun and that part of the earth's surface which is turned from it. Ver. 11. Here we have grass growing, and fruit trees bearing fruit, before the creation of the sun, and yet the heat of the sun is essential to such processes *now*; and the use of the sun, in ver. 14, is said to be to cause the *seasons*; these, however, are caused by the earth's changes in going round the sun. Is it likely that God would so entirely alter his plans? first producing effects by his immediate will, and then creating afterwards for the production of them, natural causes, on which those effects are constantly dependent? Verse 27 says, "that God made man male and female," and yet in the next chapter it is said that no female existed; the male is named Adam, and when the female is produced she is called Eve, but in chap. v. ver. 2, both the man and woman are named Adam.

Gen. ii. What can be meant by God's resting? Could an Infinite Being grow weary? Is not his present work, that of preservation and government, the uninterrupted continuation of his work of creation? Is it more fatiguing to make than to preserve? Would not the universe perish if God ceased to sustain and operate upon it, only for one single moment? Verses 4, 5, describe as the work of one day what, in the first chapter, is mentioned as the work of three days; and the herbs and plants which, in the first chapter, the earth was commanded to bring forth, are here said to have been created before being put into the earth. Verse 5 makes rain, and the cultivation of the ground by man, to be *necessary* to the growth of vegetation, which, according to the former chapter, had been effected without these mediums. What could the trees of life and of knowledge be? Certainly not *fruit* trees! Did God originally give that life and knowledge by means of *trees*, which the Scriptures elsewhere say he now gives by his Holy Spirit? Did God really make a woman out of one of the man's ribs? had the man *then* a rib more than he possesses now? What advantage could arise from such a mode of constructing a woman? Am I required to adore a wisdom which does not become obvious to me?

Gen. iii. If a serpent could really reason, it had, and must still have, human faculties; for, according to the description of the discourse of the serpent which deceived Eve, the serpent was capable even of the moral estimation of wisdom and knowledge! Some say this serpent was a fallen angel in disguise, but that is inconsistent with the curse pronounced on the serpent *as a serpent* in verse 14. Of those who say the serpent was the devil, I would ask, Does the devil go on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life? Or, in fact, does even the serpent itself *eat dust*, or did that reptile ever do so? What is meant by saying that if man should eat of the tree of life he would live for ever? Does he not necessarily live for ever in the eternal world? Would eating of that tree after his fall have caused him to live for ever in this world, when he *previously* had been allowed to eat of it, and thus already possessed all the immortality it could give? If man was already possessed of immortality, it could not remain to be acquired! It was said that in the day he ate of the tree of knowledge he would

die, but he lived many years after that! And if by eating of the forbidden tree he was relieved from living in this world for ever, his posterity who shall be admitted into heaven are much indebted to his fall! Heaven must be better than earth, even in its best condition!

Gen. iv. We are told that Adam's fall made his offspring wholly evil, and under condemnation: how was it then that Abel was still acceptable to God? But it seems a strange thing that he should be accepted because he was a shepherd, and Cain be rejected because he was a husbandman! Was not Adam before his fall appointed by God Himself to be a husbandman, when he was appointed to dress and keep the garden of Eden? How could Cain be afraid of being killed by every one that should find him, when no one existed beside himself, except Adam, Eve, and Abel? Or how could he marry a wife when no woman but Eve existed? or build a "city" with his own hands? What can be meant by God's putting a mark on Cain to prevent men from killing him, when no men were in existence? What men could be meant? and what could they know of the object of this mark, even supposing it to exist prominently in their view?

Gen. vi. What can be meant by the sons of God being attracted by the beauty of the daughters of men, and taking them in marriage? If these "sons of God" were spiritual beings, why may not the tales of young women being taken away by the fairies be equally possible, and even true? And then the offspring were men of renown;—why it must have seemed to the beholders that these women, being married to spiritual and therefore invisible beings, became pregnant miraculously. And this is said to be a part of the Word of God which is able to make us wise unto salvation! Certainly it is very mysterious! In ver. 6, The unchangeable God is described as "*repenting that He had made man.*" How could this be? He surely must have foreseen what would happen; and foreknowledge is incompatible with repenting. Besides, in other parts it is said, that He is "*not man that He should repent!*"—I do not see how Noah and his three sons could build such an immense building as the ark; nor, indeed, how a building of the dimensions described could be held together, unless the timbers were immensely larger and stronger than are fur-

nished by any trees which now exist, for the ark is computed to have been above eighty thousand tons burthen! What power could lift and fashion and firmly put together these immense timbers? And how firmly they must have been united to hold together! Ten thousand of our best ship-builders could not construct such a building, even if timbers large enough could be found! And then—how could Noah be acquainted with, or procure the natural food of *every* particular animal, and which he was directed (ver. 21) to store up, while he was occupied in carrying on the building? or could a building of the size described be large enough to contain a full supply of food, or even all the animals only? How would the *carnivorous* beasts be subsisted? Perhaps a miracle may be suggested: but why not equally suggest, on the other hand, that a new creation of animals after the flood had subsided would have answered the purpose as well as a miracle? Again: Why did not God effect a sudden destruction of the wicked by ordinary death, instead of doing it by this flood of waters? For who can imagine the *possibility* of such a flood, a flood which covered “the whole earth,” and even “the tops of the mountains” (ver. 19)! If a miracle be alleged again, that only adds to the mystery; and there is nothing edifying in mysteries!

Gen. viii. I cannot understand why the very same reason should be given in ver. 21 for *not* destroying mankind in *future* by a flood as had previously been given *for* destroying the world by a flood; namely, the wickedness of mankind. And what can be meant by God’s thus altering his mind in consequence of his smelling the burning flesh of slain animals? What can be meant by the ground being no more cursed, since the curse in chap. iii. ver. 17, is *still* in operation even in our day?

Gen. ix. I do not understand how all animals can be said to be delivered into the power of Noah, including even the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, which were as much out of his reach as they are out of ours, and indeed much more so, in consequence of our knowledge of navigation and gunpowder. What can be meant by man’s blood being required at the hand of every beast? (ver. 5). Are beasts, like men, morally responsible, and consequently

immortal? If so, they, as well as man, were created likenesses of God? How can the rain-bow be at the same time a miraculous sign, and a common atmospherical appearance? Were there no rain-bows when it rained during the sun-shine before the time of Noah? If there were, how could God be said to set his bow in the clouds to signify what is stated in ver. 13 to 16?

Gen. xi. Of all the impossible things that ever were devised, surely the building of the tower of Babel is the most so! The people must have been mad to think of such a thing as building a tower to reach up to heaven, and to commence building it in a plain or valley, especially while they were destitute of all materials suitable for building even a decent common house, for it is said that they had slime for mortar! How could they cement their bricks together with slime? If they were as bad architects as they were bricklayers, they would make but little way with their tower! And this tower they proposed to build *to get a name*, and to prevent their being scattered abroad! What can be meant by this? If they were so insane as the description makes them, they could not have had capacity sufficient to build even a hovel! Besides, the confusion of their language must have been attended with a revelation of new and complete languages in place of the former one, or the whole race would have been destroyed by being struck dumb, or losing at once all the advantages of intelligible speech! This is altogether incomprehensible!

And all these strange things are found in the first eleven chapters of the Bible! Well might Sir William Jones suggest the probability of these chapters being purely allegorical! But there are other very unaccountable and contradictory things said in other places; for instance—

Gen. xix. Let any man capable of forming a just opinion say whether this record of Lot and his daughters contains aught *on the face of it* that conduces to edification. If instruction be hidden in the narrative, it is hidden from the unlearned altogether, for the learned never can choose such a subject as this for *public* discussion.

Gen. xxi. What a sad example of wickedness is presented in the conduct of Abraham and Sarah towards Hagar and Ishmael; but it is mentioned without any condemnation.

Gen. xxii. Granting the commanded sacrifice of Isaac was typical, it is difficult to understand how God could require murder to be committed as an evidence of faith; or how the willingness to commit it, though called "an offering to God," could prove the heavenly state of the murderer. There is something very shocking in a parent being compelled to meditate, even by a divine command, and that for the space of nearly four days, the murder of his child, and which was to be followed by the burning of his body! Surely this must have been a temptation from the devil, and Abraham mistook it for a temptation from God, for the Apostle says that God tempteth no man (James i. 13.)

Gen. xxiii. It appears to be inconsistent with the moral attributes of God, that he should make his blessing to be contingent on, or to be bound by, the fraudulent obtaining by Jacob from his father of the blessing he intended to pronounce on Esau; in the description of this occurrence, God is represented as being arrayed against the innocent and injured, in favor of the liar and the plunderer. In chap. xxx. ver. 37, I find Jacob still a cheat, and his fraud is mentioned without a word of reprobation.

Exod. vii. After Moses had turned all the water in the land of Egypt, of every description, into blood, it is said, that the magicians *did the same*. How could this be? Where could they find water to practise upon? Surely this total want of water must have destroyed the Egyptians and Israelites together, and so have terminated the strife between Moses and Pharoah! Nothing is said of the blood being turned back again into water.

Exod. viii. What can be meant by all the dust of the land of Egypt becoming lice? and by the magicians trying, after that it had become so, *to make it so*, but they could not succeed? After all the water had become blood, the existence of a river of water is mentioned in verse 20.

Exod. ix. It is here said that all the beasts of Egypt died, and yet it appears that the Egyptians soon after found chariots and horses to pursue the departing Israelites. How is this? Besides, the Egyptians had been *all* smitten themselves with grievous diseases, and, therefore, could be in no condition for such a journey (ver. 9, 11.) In ver. 25



it is said, that the beasts were all killed with hail, although they had all previously died of a murrain.

Exod. x. It is said that the whole land of Egypt was for three days involved in the thickest darkness possible, and yet that all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. This is quite inconceivable.

Exod. xi. I do not know how to reconcile this cheating of the Egyptians of their jewels with the moral precepts of the Bible.

Judges. In passing through this book, I am pained by the cruelties I find recorded in it. Sampson, in particular, was the veriest ruffian, yet he is described as being the peculiar object of Divine favour! I cannot understand this. What a horrible narrative is given in the three last chapters! Who that desires to be profited by his reading would read these chapters a second time?

1 Kings ii. The dying charge of David to Solomon exhibits a dreadful degree of barbarous depravity. David admits that he had sworn to Shimei that he would not put him to death, and yet at the same time he seeks to evade his oath, by charging Solomon to bring down his hoary head to the grave with blood! What detestable wickedness is this! And yet, although he perpetrated this wickedness in the prospect of death, his conduct is not reprehended; and Christians are accustomed to represent David as "the man after God's own heart!"

Our friend took notes of many other things that appeared incomprehensible or contradictory, but we select, in addition to the above, only the following:—

2 Kings ii. The impatient vindictiveness of Elisha to the children who mocked him, and God's signifying his approbation of it, by causing forty-two of them to be torn to pieces by bears, is very shocking!

Isaiah ix. What can be meant by sucking the milk of the Gentiles, and the breast of kings?

Hab. iii. What can be meant by God's riding on horses and chariots, and walking through the sea with his chariots? In other places, God is made to ride on clouds, and on the wings of the wind.

Zech. xii. What can be meant by God's smiting every horse with astonishment?

Ezek. iv. What can be meant by the prophet lying on his left side 390 days, to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel; and 40 days, to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah? And what can be meant by his being commanded of God to eat barley cakes baked with the dung of man, in the sight of the people? Is this a part of that Scripture which is given for instruction in righteousness?

Ezek. xxiv. It appears inconsistent with our ideas of what is becoming, that the prophet should be called to bear the heavy calamity of his wife's death, and at the same time be forbidden to mourn or weep, when "the desire of his eyes was taken away at a stroke."

Ezek. xxxix. What can be meant by the prophet being commanded to "speak to every feathered fowl," to come and eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of princes, and of all manner of cattle and sheep; to eat fat to the full, and drink blood until drunken; and to be filled at God's table with horses, chariots, mighty men, and men of war?

Hosea i. I cannot see how it was just to the prophet to command him to take a whore for his wife, even although it might be deemed a strong figure of the idolatries of the Israelites.

Hosea iii. And now the prophet is commanded to "love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress," and accordingly he "*bought her*," to "abide with him many days." This is altogether unaccountable to me!

Matt. vii. The request of the disciple that he might be allowed to pay the last duties to his deceased father appears reasonable; and therefore the refusal appears to be a discountenancing of dutiful and humane feelings.

Luke xiv. This chapter contains two incomprehensible commands;—one (ver. 12,) never to invite our friends, relations, or rich neighbours to dinner or supper, but only the poor; and the other (ver. 26,) requires us to hate our father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, and our own life, or we cannot be true disciples of Jesus Christ. No doubt this is said upon the same principle as it is said that we must pluck out an eye, or cut off a hand or a foot, if it offends us. But *what is that principle of interpretation?*

Matt. xxiv., &c. What can be meant by the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, and by his being seen by all the inhabitants of the earth, for he certainly could only be seen by those just beneath the clouds in which he comes, and which are only over one spot on the surface of the earth? In the Revelations, it is said that He will come upon a white horse! And what is meant by the earth being burnt up, and nevertheless that some persons are to be left upon it (v. 40, 41)? and by its being destroyed, whereas it is clearly predicted that the Messiah's kingdom, *founded thereon*, shall endure for ever?

Revelations. What a mysterious book is this! How unprofitable its mysteries appear! And if, as soon as its prophecies are laid open by fulfilment, the earth is to be destroyed, they never will become profitable to any one for want of opportunity! What can be meant by the Holy City New Jerusalem being 12,000 furlongs, that is, 1500 miles high? Can this be a real city?

Very deeply did these difficulties press upon Job's mind. He did not know how to give up Revelation, because he loved its pure precepts of piety, charity, and active duty. But he did not know how to retain any confidence in the Bible as a revelation from God, until his difficulties should be removed. This state of mental conflict secretly wore down his spirits and irritated his feelings, combined with the recollection of his various experiences of the moral unworthiness of people professedly religious.

One day, when he was uttering his feelings with much bitterness, the pity of his brother was excited, and he remarked "*there is one sect which you have not yet tried.*" "What sect is that?" impatiently demanded Job. "*The Swedenborgians,*" was the reply; "they have no chapel at present, but they meet at the house of their preacher." Thither Job went. He listened to the discourse with astonishment. He went again. Here was a new system of doctrine presented to him, not to be blindly believed, but rationally understood,—a system which inculcated the divinity of Jesus Christ without mystery, and which, nevertheless, rejected the supposed vicarious sacrifice, with all its horrors and injustice, and vindicated the Scrip-

tures from the charge of setting it forth ; a system which gave a new view of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and which, as Job thought at the time, if it could be established by conclusive evidence, would prove the Scriptures to be indeed the " Word of God," by raising them to that true and real dignity which that magnificent title implies,—the dignity of being, in every part of it, the repository of infinite goodness and infinite wisdom. He sought the conversation of the preacher. None of his questions were evaded ; but every one was met in the most ingenuous, unassuming, and liberal spirit ; and answered in the most consistent, lucid, and satisfactory manner. He began to read the writings of the illustrious Swedenborg. A new intellectual and moral world opened upon his delighted view. He found he was able to see the Lord Jesus Christ as "*God over all, blessed for ever,*" without qualification or reservation, and in a clear and glorious light, without a single over-shadowing cloud of mystery or contradiction. Without going back to tripersonalism, he could now embrace a new Scripture doctrine of the Divine Trinity, and one perfectly free from every blemish of contradiction, and thus could entertain far more exalted ideas of his Saviour than he was ever able to form while he was a believer in three Persons in the God-head. He could also now see his God as ONE, because One Divine Person, and in an aspect of love and mercy immensely exceeding his utmost efforts so to behold his Maker, while, as a Unitarian, he endeavored to think of God as a Benevolent Somewhat diffused like an ethereal essence through infinite space.

Indeed he was delighted to find that whatever is good and useful, whatever is lucid and consistent, in other systems of Christianity, is harmoniously brought together in its proper arrangement and connexion, in the doctrines of the New Church, so that those doctrines may be regarded as embracing all the revealed truth deduced from the Holy Word by all denominations of Christians, purified from all admixture of error and human invention. He found the divine authority and sanction, the unchangeableness of doctrine, and the infallibility of interpretation, which is the boast of the Roman Catholic, combined with

the utmost freedom of investigation, so that the general doctrines of the New Church may be regarded as invisible "bands of love" (Hos. xi. 4), by which the Father of mercies holds and guides his children, while he tenderly suffers them freely to expatiate hither and thither, into all the particulars involved in the articles of their faith, without wandering away from the grand fundamental principles of all *true* religion, that *God is One, and God is good*. He found the great principle of the Protestant, that the Scriptures are the only rule of a Christian's faith and practice, earnestly contended for, and yet perfectly harmonized with the Catholic doctrine of authority and uniformity, abstractedly considered. He found that nothing is required to be believed in the New Church, but what may be clearly drawn from, and confirmed by, the literal sense of the Word; and that the important duty of searching the Scriptures, which is thus individually to be performed, in order to the formation of a real and sincere faith, is blessed with a sure and unerring guidance, which has all the effect of a voice from heaven, while it is congenial with the freest exercise of the understanding, and clear of all the mischiefs of priestly dictation, and the liability to contradictory decisions of erring and changeable men. He saw that while the doctrine of transubstantiation is rejected, the member of the New Church is enabled clearly to discern *how* the Lord is *really* present in the Holy Supper, without reducing that divine institution to the unspiritual and unmeaning ceremony which it is made to be by some Protestants. He found in the New Church an equally determined adherence to the belief of what is thought to be revealed with that which is manifested by Trinitarians, but combined with a clear opening of the mysterious words of Scripture, and which by Trinitarians are implicitly believed, without being understood. He found here the freedom of discussion, the demand for reasonable proof, and the determination to believe nothing but what is rationally proved to be true, as instanced in the tone of the Unitarian and sceptic, but combined with a full and fair answer to that demand, to the full satisfaction of sound reason, acting under the influence of true humility, and a supreme love to what is good and pure, and

spiritually useful. He found vital and inward religion, so exclusively vaunted by Evangelicals; and the inward waiting on and communion with the Spirit, so much cultivated by the followers of George Fox; here duly regarded and combined with just and philosophical views, practical principles, and moral habits, founded on the deepest reverence for the Scriptures, so that the internal affections are thus brought down, and firmly fixed in a corresponding external. He found the supremacy of moral principle and practice over doctrine, as contended for by the moral philosopher and Utilitarian, in full operation under the designation of charity, or the love of use for the Lord's sake, so that the external principle of morality derives interiorly from the spiritual mind, and thus from the Lord, an interior principle of spiritual life, by which it is made spiritually alive, and is exalted to a conjunction with the Source of all good. He found an entire and universal reference of all things to God, and which is aimed at by the Predestinarian, accomplished in an enlightened trust in a particular and overruling Providence, resting on clear, rational and Scriptural grounds, and yet perfectly free from all the objections which justly lie against the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination and election, and perfectly reconcileable with human liberty and rationality. He found the doctrine of free-will asserted, and clearly exhibited, without removing man in the least degree from a momentary dependance on the Source of life and power. He was enabled to see the origin of moral and physical evil in such a light as to justify the Divine goodness, and to make the Divine foreknowledge appear perfectly compatible with human freedom and accountability. He perceived that although man is a fallen creature, he is continually kept in the capability of surmounting his infirmities, and overcoming his evil propensities; and thus he was enabled to obviate the objections of disbelievers in hereditary evil, on the one hand, and the advocates of man's moral incapacity on the other. He saw the Wesleyan doctrine of assurance of salvation rectified, and placed on a rational basis; and the religious feelings, so strongly cultivated by Methodists, not extinguished, but directed into useful and sanctifying channels, so as to be active, without

enthusiasm on the one hand, and without being impeded on the other, by cold, unprofitable, and barren speculations: thus maintaining a happy medium through the affections of the will, and the truths of the understanding, justly and mutually tempering and balancing each other. He saw the belief in the agency of good and evil spirits, called angels and devils, as set forth in the Scriptures, placed on a truly rational and edifying basis, accompanied with clear views of the nature of such agency, and of its varied manifestations, the whole being calculated to guard the man of the church against running into fanaticism and superstition on the one hand, and scepticism on the other. Besides all this, he saw all that is terrible in what is commonly believed concerning hell, rendered more acceptable to the discriminating mind, by a sound explanation, yet without the belief in a future state of retribution being in the least degree impaired in its moral efficacy:—he also saw all that is attractive in what is commonly believed concerning heaven rendered inexpressibly more so, by an explanatory adaptation of heavenly joys to the various affections, faculties, and powers of the being who is destined to partake of them. In short, he found no point of doctrine strained, or raised out of its proper place, by being cultivated above, or to the comparative neglect of, other points, nor any point unduly depressed or neglected, but all duly and equally regarded, as forming one harmonious whole; he contrasted this keeping of all the points of faith in their proper connexion with each other, with the contrary conduct of the various Christian sects, each of which takes some one point out of its place, and fondly prefers and cherishes it above others, until the whole lose their proper order, harmony, mutual dependence and connexion, and thus become perverted and falsified. And further, he found that he was placed in the fullest liberty to discuss the contents of the Scriptures, without any temptation to warp them, or take the slightest liberty with them, because he was blessed with such an infallible rule of interpretation as precluded almost the possibility of his straying into the wilds of error. He saw that without countenancing the infidel assertion, that facts have proved the inefficacy and therefore unsuitability of the Bible to effect the moral

improvement of man, he had not been mistaken in his moral estimate of the Christian world; for according to a testimony that is beyond dispute, the Christian church, as predicted in the New Testament, has now really come to its end, through evils of life and errors of doctrine, so that now there is not one stone of the spiritual temple left standing upon another, which has not been thrown down. On every hand there is nothing but a confusion of ideas and doctrines amongst Christian sects which may fitly be compared to the confusion of tongues at the building of Babel. Doctrines either derogatory to the Divine character, irreverent to the Holy Word, or subversive of morality, are put forth with the utmost confidence as genuine Christianity.

But, above all, Job was delighted that he had now obtained a solution of all doubts and difficulties attendant on the literal construction of Scripture. He was now able to account for all that before appeared unaccountable; he was able to understand all that previously seemed incomprehensible; to reconcile what heretofore appeared utterly contradictory; and, by means of the key he had now obtained to the *spiritual sense* of the Word, he was able to see and to experience, that "*All Scripture given by inspiration of God [IN CONSEQUENCE OF ITS POSSESSING IN EVERY PART OF IT A SPIRITUAL SENSE] is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected.*" By means of the divine science of correspondences between things spiritual or natural, now revived by Swedenborg, and agreeably to which, by the Providence of their Author, the Scriptures have been written, he found he could penetrate the clouds of the literal sense, and behold the spiritual sense, which lies concealed therein, and in which the Lord is now making his spiritual advent into the souls of those who humbly and thankfully receive Him, in power and great glory. The gates of all creation seemed thrown open to admit him to view the heavenly realities which all natural existences symbolize. Thus could he "look through nature up to nature's God," and equally so in the natural creation, and the literal or natural sense of the Scriptures. He now saw the Divine Goodness and Wisdom fully justified both in the works of God,



and in his Word. All His Providence, and all His dispensations of grace, alike shone before his mental vision, in the fulness of glory and beauty!

Being thus greatly delighted with his new acquisition, in the spirit of that benevolence which is never wanting in those who "*believe with the heart unto righteousness*," even where their faith is a mistaken one, Job proceeded to offer to all whom he knew the glad tidings, that a New Church is now commencing by the Lord, through the instrumentality of his highly gifted servant Emanuel Swedenborg; that this church is free from all error, and is founded on pure and genuine doctrine both as to faith, and as to life; that this doctrine acknowledges the Sole and Supreme Divinity of the Lord the Saviour, and the supremacy of charity as compared with faith; and that this church, as to its doctrine, was predicted under the figure of the "*Holy City New Jerusalem*," as mentioned in the Revelation of John. But here again our friend was again met with convincing proofs of the degraded state of Christianity, and of professing Christians at the present day. He found the Lord's words verified, that when the Son of Man shall come, *He will not find faith in the earth*; he found that now, as well as at his first coming, "*men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil*." Instead of being received with kindness, and listened to with candour, he was met with senseless derision! Utterly unfounded and injurious reports which had been invented or propagated against Swedenborg and the New Church, especially by reverend personages who too nearly resembled a certain Ephesian, named Demetrius (Acts xix.), were thrown in his teeth. Persons who declared that they had never read a line of Swedenborg, and never would, pronounced the most confident, and at the same time, of course, the most absurd and false judgments of the new doctrines, accompanied with the most malignant denunciations against all who favored them. The retailers of groundless slander had the assurance to assert that they were better qualified to judge of books which they had never read, than those who had studied them with the utmost solicitude, diligence and care\*! Job was utterly astonished! He had seen

\* A married lady, the daughter of a clergyman, on being recom-

much of the baseness of the exteriorly decent portion of mankind, but to find all denominations of Trinitarians (or Arians) keeping each other in countenance in uttering the vilest slanders, and seemingly vying with each other in the evil work of propagating them, taking courage from the circumstance that none condemned them except the party assailed so unjustly, and a few *good* persons, whom the slanderers pronounced not *really* religious; and thus confederating to crush the infant New Church by every contrivance of malignity and sophistry! all this was too much for poor Job's feelings; and he felt constrained, like his Divine Master of old, to weep over the degraded and wretched state of the faithless "wife of the Lamb!" Alas for her, said Job, for her time is short! Let her magnify herself as she may in her frippery, with which she has decked herself in the place of those "beautiful garments of Jerusalem" which she has cast off, yet even while she is glorying in what she vainly calls the spread of the Gospel, her neglected and despised Husband "*shall strip her naked, and set her as in the day she was born, and make her a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst.*" For a time she may succeed in keeping the mystical woman with her man-child in the wilderness, where, however, she hath a place prepared of God; and although while there, the serpent may cast out of his mouth a flood of falsehood to cause her to be carried away, and although the dragon may be wroth with the woman, and make war with her seed, even with *those who keep the commandments of God*, yet let her possess her soul in patience, for soon will it be seen and acknowledged, that she is clothed with the sun of pure love; has her foundation on the moon of a true faith; and shines with the starry crown of intelligence and wisdom. The kings of the earth may again take counsel together, how they may subvert the dominion of Jehovah in his Humanity, but their efforts will avail nothing; never shall they be able to

mended to read certain New Church publications, exclaimed with signs of horror, "I read them! I would not for the world! I should be afraid that God would punish my presumption by making me believe them, and then send me to hell for believing them!"

prevent Jerusalem from becoming "a praise in the earth."  
"*The Lord will hasten it in his time.*" (See Rev. xii.)

It is unnecessary to detail at greater length the reasons which moved our friend to embrace the doctrines of the New Christian Church. Those reasons are sufficiently implied in the already stated rational and scriptural objections which he felt to the prevailing doctrines, and to which he perceived the New Doctrines in no degree to be liable.

Our friend met with some persons who thus argued against his new faith; "If," said they, "these doctrines of yours are new, for that very reason they cannot be true." But Job disregarded this cavilling objection, being content to rely on the divine prediction regarding the *New Jerusalem* which should descend from heaven to earth, and which he saw clearly could mean nothing else than a *new* and glorious state of the Christian church *as to doctrine, and as to life*. He found the Lord represented by the inspired writer as saying, in reference to this New Church, "*Behold, I make all things NEW!*" for although the *new* doctrine is, in reality, *as old as the Apostles*, it is, nevertheless, relatively new; not new, indeed, in its relation to the Scriptures themselves, but new in its relation to those interpreters of Scripture who, from a very early period, have successively displaced the Apostolic doctrine by inventions of their own. And since the leading falsifications, commencing with the doctrine of three co-equal Divine Persons, are now fifteen centuries old, the new doctrine may be considered as new compared with them, because it is now revealed anew; and because it is perceived as new by those who newly receive it, in consequence of their having been previously habituated to the old false doctrine. And very striking indeed is the contrast between the *Old Paradoxes* improperly fathered upon the Scriptures, and the *New Doctrines* fairly and harmoniously deduced from them. Our friend sometimes delighted himself with placing before his view in contrast, the *Old Paradoxes*, and the *New Doctrines*, in the following manner, while his heart overflowed with thankfulness to the Lord for having brought him out of the darkness of human

inventions, on the one hand, and of self-intelligent and rash negations, on the other, into the marvellous light of his heavenly truth, now manifested *anew*, and with increased splendour, for the use of his *New Church*.

The reader will please to take the trouble of comparing each contrasted article in the following columns; and afterwards of reading the left hand column, and then the right, *entirely through*, by which he will obtain a clear and coherent idea of the Orthodox, and also of the New Church system of Faith.

*Old Paradoxes constituting the New Truths forming the Faith of the Orthodox Faith.*

1. Although there is but **ONE God**, it is not inconsistent with this belief to confess that there are **THREE separate Objects of Worship**, or Divine Persons, each possessing an independent Divine Will and Understanding, and each of whom *by Himself* is God and Lord.

2. Although each Person is possessed of separate Divine Attributes, and is God, and is to be *thought of as God*, independently, and by Himself, He must not be *called* a separate God, for this would be to acknowledge *three Gods*, and this would create scandal. It is allowable to use the word "God" in prayers and discourses, and also in common conversation, either to mean *One Person*, or *Three Persons*, as may be found *convenient*.

3. Although Jehovah some times means the Father, or First Person *only*, whose Son is called "the Son of the Highest," that is, of Jehovah

1. There is One God who is One both in Essence and in Person, even our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is the Eternal Jehovah manifested in a Divine-Human Form, so that the whole Trinity centres in Him, and thus "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." John x. 30.

2. The Trinity consists of three Divine Essentials in One Divine Person; the Divine Spirit or Soul of Jesus Christ is the Father, His Divine Humanity or Body is the Son, and His Divine Operation or Proceeding Influence is the Holy Spirit. Whenever a Christian uses the word "God," he ought to think of the Divine Form or Humanity, named Jesus Christ, in which is the Father, and from which is the Spirit. John xvi. 14, 15.

3. The Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST was the Eternal Jehovah, and "the Son" was so conceived as to be in no wise separate from

the Father, yet it is to be believed that there are three Persons in Jehovah, but not in Jehovah the Father; it is not to be said that there are three Persons in the Father, because He is but one of the three. Sometimes Jehovah means all the three Persons, and each of them; and sometimes the First Person only. In the former case, the Persons are said to be *in* Jehovah, and then the second is not to be considered as the Son of Jehovah, because that would make Him the Son of Himself, or else would make Jehovah to be the First Person only. This latitude of interpretation is found to be very convenient. Sometimes also it is said by Trinitarians, that there are three Persons *in God*; at others, there is "*One God in Persons three*," also that God *is* three Persons; but what these differing phrases specifically mean is not to be inquired into, because, if tried by any parallel expressions in common use, they must appear inconsistent with, and contradictory to, each other. Mysteries can only be adored, by keeping the eyes shut.

4. Although the Second Person is called "*a Son*," which implies *a beginning*, He must, nevertheless, be confidently declared to be an *Eternal* Divine Person, whether any contradiction be perceived herein or not, and although it is expressly said that the Son had no existence as a Son until born of Mary. Luke i. 35.

the Father, but One with Him individually; so that the Father and Son are One Person as the soul and body of man are one. So far as the Son, according to the common law of nature, bore the image of the mother, He was not as yet Divine; but inasmuch as He put off that image in the world by successive steps, and put on, in its place, the image of Jehovah, the whole Humanity was gradually made Divine and Jehovah, by union with the Divine Nature which dwelt in it, and from which it originated. And inasmuch as that which continuously proceeds from God is God, therefore the Holy Spirit Proceeding from the Divine Humanity, as well as the Divine Humanity and Indwelling Divinity, is Jehovah. Hence it appears that *since* his Incarnation, Jehovah has three Essentials, each of which is Himself, and therefore is Jehovah, namely, the Essential Divinity, the Divine Humanity, and the Divine Proceeding or Operation. Before the Incarnation, the Divine Trinity consisted of the Divine Love, the Divine Wisdom, and the Divine Operation.

4. The Son of God is the Humanity born *in time* of the Virgin, and begotten of the Father by the Operation of His Holy Spirit. While the Lord was in the world, He sometimes *spoke* as the *Eternal* Word or Wisdom of the Father; and sometimes as the *same* Word, but as "*made flesh*" *in time*.

5. Although the three Persons held a council about the fall of man, it is not to be supposed that either could gain any thing from the other by such consultation; neither is it to be supposed that they consulted—for nothing.

5. Jehovah from his Omniscience foresaw man's fall, and provided the remedy of Redemption to be effected in the fulness of time. The same love that moved Him to create, moved Him to redeem.

6. Although from the circumstance of man, who is but one person, being created in the image of God, it might be argued that God must also be but One Person; for that if God be three Divine Persons, every man, in order to his standing in God's image, must be three human persons, since a being who is but one person can be no likeness to a Being who is three Persons,—this argument is not to be regarded. But should it be demanded by an objector wherein the likeness of man to God consists, whether, since it is not a personal likeness, it be a likeness to the angry First Person, or the never-angry Second Person? it were best to evade the question.

6. Man was created in the image of God by his having a will receptive of the Divine Love, an understanding receptive of the Divine Wisdom, and active powers capable of co-operating with the Divine Operation. Before the incarnation of Jehovah the Divine Trinity, into the image of which man was created, was in first principles, but by the assumption and glorification of Humanity the Divine Trinity descended into last principles. In its former state, the Divine Trinity may be compared to that existing in an angel, who has no natural body; but, in its present state, it may be compared to that existing in a man *in the world*, who is a spirit inhabiting a natural body, formed of the lowest natural principles and forms.

7. Although the Son of God had two Fathers, one from eternity,—the First Person; and one in time,—the Third Person; or, in other words, although the Father was the Father of the Son's Eternal Divinity, and the Holy Ghost was the Father of his Humanity, yet "the Father" always and exclusively means the First Person only,—of whose paternity however no idea can be formed,—and never means

7. In the incarnation of Jehovah, his Divine Proceeding, called the "Holy Spirit," and the "Power of the Highest," animated the rudiment of a Human Body or Humanity taken from the virgin; and the Holy Spirit, which is not to be thought of as any thing separate from the Highest whose Power it was in operation, dwelt in the Humanity, and thereby Jehovah dwelt in it, until it was fully glorified

the third Person, whose paternity is plainly described in Luke i. 35.

and then the Holy Spirit proceeded from, and through, the Divine Humanity. John xiv. 17, 18.

8. Although the Tripersonal *Doctrine* admits the Son of God to have had two Fathers, (see Bishop Pearson on the creed) it is always to be considered that He had but One; and that, whenever he addresses "*The Father*," He does not mean the Father of his Humanity, but the Father of his Divinity; thus, for instance, when He exclaimed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit," He did not mean the Father of his Humanity, the Third Person, but the First Person. It would, however, be impossible to shew, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, Why the term Father should always be taken to mean the First Person, and not the Third, —except that the understanding of it to mean the Third would derange the whole scheme of the Tripersonal Atonement, and that is a sufficient reason for understanding the Humanity, under its sense of weakness and suffering, as never addressing *its own* Father by the term Father, but only the First Person, who was *not* its Father.

9. Although it is said that "it pleased the Father that in Him (the Son) should all fulness dwell;" and although it is said, that the Father gave to the Son His Spirit (or the third Person) without measure, yet it is to be believed, that the Son

8. The Operation of Jehovah called the "Spirit of God," was one and the same in all things, and on all occasions, and when it is said that God "created all things by the Spirit (or breath) of his mouth," and also when it is said that the "Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin Mary," it is to be understood that Jehovah the Father operated from Himself as the Creator and Redeemer, and not that any Divine Person operated who was personally distinct from the Father. It was because the Holy Spirit is to be understood as the Operation of the Father, or as the Father operating, that the Lord Jesus Christ always meant by His Father, not any Divine emanation separate from the Father, but the Eternal Jehovah, who first became His Father when He begat Him by an emanation from himself; and who, as He begat His Humanity, continually sustained it, both during its life in the world, and its state of death in the tomb, not suffering it to see corruption, and finally raised it from the dead to an indissoluble union with Himself.

9. The Humanity named Jesus Christ, so far as it was not as yet fully Divine, was wholly dependant on the Divinity, which continually operated to make the Humanity the infinite possessor of its own fulness; this It received when It became

Himself had all fulness from eternity, and therefore, being full, could receive no further fulness, either from the First or the Third Person. The meaning then of the above Scripture declaration is a mystery; and, happily, the cloak of mystery is large enough to cover over every possible difficulty or palpable contradiction. It is therefore in vain that the "heretic" reasons, that the whole tenor of the Lord's words proves the inaccuracy of the Tri-personal hypothesis, and shews that He did not speak of Divine Persons, but that He personified Divine principles, as He indeed expressly declares, in John xvi. 25, by saying, "*These things* [concerning the Father and Son] *have I spoken unto you in parables.*" (Marginal reading).

10. Although when in the world the Second Person had a Divinity exclusively and independently *his own*, and so possessed Almighty Power independently of the other two Divine Persons, that was no reason why He should not uniformly, as it were, forget, and pass by *His own* Divine power, and be obliged to pray for aid to the First Person; for it is to be observed, that if He was not *obliged* to do this, and if there was no need for Him to do so, in consequence of his being entirely dependant on the Father, his prayer was nothing more than a dramatic action, performed for the sake of effect.

11. Although the Son prayed

fully glorified by the Divinity, or the Father's own self, by a plenary union with the Divinity. So far as the sense of dependance existed with the Lord, he declared, that as to his Humanity, He could do nothing of Himself, and that the Father both furnished Him with work to be done, and power to do it; but so far as the Humanity was made divine, and thus possessed Divine Power by union with the Divinity, the Lord declared the fact by such declarations as the following: "All things that the Father hath are mine;" "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will;" and "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father."

10. The Son had indeed a Divinity of His own, but it was the Divinity of His Humanity: this he had, *first*, by virtue of His conception from the Divinity; and, *secondly*, by virtue of the states which He acquired by co-operating with the Operation of the Divinity within him called the Father. The circumstance of the Lord sometimes praying to the Father arose from his passing through states of Humiliation, during which the Divine things of his humanity which united him with the Father were hidden from view, and the infirmities inherited from the mother were alone present to his consciousness.

11. It was in temptations that



to the Father like a common man, and just as if He had no Divinity at all of *His own*; and although when He confessed that He was *entirely dependent on the Father for all things*, He proclaimed that He had neither will nor judgment of his own, either belonging to his Humanity or his Divinity, and could neither do works, nor utter words, of himself; and although it is said that "He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father," yet whoever, on the alleged ground of these facts, shall presume to deny, that the Son was a Divine person, *coequal* with the Father, shall perish! And yet while this coequality is acknowledged, it must also be acknowledged, that the Divinity of the Son was powerless of Itself, and derived all its will and judgment, and even its life from its coequal, the Father; but no one can tell whether from the Father of the Son's Humanity, which alone was infirm, or the Father of his Divinity, which, although it was Almighty, either could not, or would not, exert its power to help its Humanity. Although all the weakness confessed be allowed to belong to the Humanity only, the difficulty still remains, Why did not *its own* Almighty Divinity render it aid? Also, supposing its own Divinity inoperative, why did not the Humanity apply to *its own* Father, the Third Person, rather than to the First Person, who was not *its* Father?

the Lord prayed to the Father, for then, as is the case with the man who is regenerating, he was not in the consciousness of the Divine good acquired in his Humanity, but only of the hereditary infirmities from the mother, brought into activity by the tempter. He did not have recourse to his own Divine acquisitions for the same reason that a Christian under temptation does not seek refuge in his spiritual attainments, for these under the dark cloud of temptation so perish from view, that it is as if they existed not. In like manner the Lord perceived in temptations only the activity of his maternal, and not of his paternal qualities and nature. Thus was he led to express all those convictions of his dependence on the Father which are found in the Gospels. But when he was not in temptation, and possessed the consciousness of the Divine things existing in his Humanity, and by virtue of which He perceived His union with the Father, He then held language quite the reverse, saying, "All things that the Father hath are mine;" "I and the Father are One;" "Whoso seeth me seeth the Father."—When the Lord's two opposite states which he passed through, called states of Humiliation and Glorification, are rightly understood, all difficulty vanishes in interpreting the apparently contradictory declarations which he made on different occasions.

12. Although it is said that the

12. The whole Deity was in-

three Divine Persons have but One Essence, which is a mystery (or, in other words, an unintelligible or unmeaning statement, incapable of definition), yet one of the Persons, or a third portion of the Divine Essence, could be incarnate, without the two other Persons or parts of the Indivisible Essence being so; but this is a mystery, and the greater it is, the more adorable.

carate in the Person of Jesus, and was the Divine Essence or Soul to his Humanity. Jesus therefore referred all his powers and acts to the Father who dwelt in Him and acted by Him; just as all the acts of the body of man are referable to his soul or essence; and as the body cannot act of itself, so neither could the Humanity of the Lord act without his Divinity.

13. Although it be true, that "As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ," it is nevertheless to be believed, that Jesus Christ had a human soul and body as well as his own personal Divinity, or soul in chief: and no repugnance to this belief is to be allowed on the ground that it assigns to Him at the same time two incompatible essences or souls, the one finite, the other infinite.

13. It was because the Lord had no finite essence or soul, but only the Infinite Divine Essence, that he could make his Humanity Divine, because it is the ceaseless tendency in the essence or soul to make its body like to itself, and thus to render it the corresponding instrument of its purposes.—It is a universal principle, that such as the essence or soul is, such is the essential quality of its form or body.

14. Although the Son of God, born of Mary, declared that He proceeded forth and came from God as His *Only* begotten Son; and although a Son always resembles his Father in nature, and the resemblance in the Lord's case was so great that He said, "Whoso seeth me seeth him that sent me," the Lord's Humanity or Body is to be thought of as being neither like Father nor mother; for, being merely human, it had no Divinity like its Father; and no hereditary evil like its mother; it was merely human, but immaculate, like Adam. The

14. The Son of God, as such, bore interiorly in His Body the Divine image of his Father; and as the Son of Mary, he bore exteriorly the image of her fallen nature, which encompassed the paternal image: thus the Humanity, by birth, was interiorly and essentially divine, and by virtue of this could be made exteriorly divine also, in proportion as the paternal and divine image superseded the maternal and finite image, which was the result of the Lord's continual victories in temptation. Thus it appears that the Lord's Humanity by birth was

Humanity of Jesus Christ is therefore not divine, and consequently not an Object of worship, but only his Divinity, notwithstanding that *It is the Divine Father* manifested and seen.

neither *wholly* Divine, nor wholly immaculate, but capable of being made wholly Divine; and having become so, It is the only proper and conceivable Object of a Christian's worship.

15. Although the three Persons are indetical in nature and thence in quality, and had but One Essence, yet at the very same time that one was *angry* at man's sin, the other two were not, but one was merciful actively, and the other passively; and thus the undivided Essence was divided against Itself; but this is a mystery.

15. God in his Inmost Essence being the most pure Love, *yes*, Love Itself, His Humanity is necessarily the self-same Love in its form or manifestation, and his Proceeding Holy Spirit is the self-same Love in operation; and thus the Divinity, Humanity, and Divine Proceeding, are One in Essence and in Person.

16. Although God is eternal and unchangeable, and all his attributes and qualities are, like Himself, eternal and unchangeable, it is convenient to except from this statement of eternal attributes the anger of God, which *began to be* when man sinned, and *ceased to be* when his sin was punished in his substitute,—although it *still burns* hot against unbelievers. Should it be objected, that God could not be made angry by a sin which He eternally foreknew, for if it could make Him angry at all, it would have done so from his first knowledge of it, that is, from eternity, and so He would have been eternally angry, and being unchangeable, He must remain eternally angry;—should this objection be raised, it must be stigmatized as a cavil, and so dismissed.

16. God being in his moving principle or motive, and thus in his essential nature, nothing but LOVE, no such infirm passion as anger can possibly find a place in the Divine bosom. Anger is, indeed, attributed to God in the Scriptures, but this is spoken according to the appearance presented to persons who are in the obscurity of an inverted mental perception, being immersed in the darkness which accompanies the dominion of evil. It is in accommodation to the mental weakness of man in his yet unregenerate and selfish state, that the Scripture represents God as being "angry with the wicked every day;"—it is because God is such in the disordered apprehension of those who cannot but conceive of Him as being like to themselves.

17. Although God (*here the first Person*) "bathed His sword of vengeance in the blood of his well-beloved Son," and perceived his groans of agony under the sufferings inflicted for man's sin "as a sweet smelling savour," God must not be thought of as lacking *mercy*, supposing Him to have *willed* those sufferings; nor, as lacking *power*, supposing Him to have been *necessitated* to inflict them.

17. The obedience of Jesus unto death was as a sweet smelling savour to the Divinity within Him, because He was to be "made perfect through suffering," and to be "greatly exalted," by His Humanity being made Divine. The sufferings of Jesus were not penal but purificatory of his Humanity from the infirmities derived from the virgin, and which were finally and fully put off on the cross. John xvii. 19.

18. Although anger and vengeance in man are wicked passions, in God they are divine virtues, and are to be honoured and revered as such; but they are by no means to be imitated in carrying out the command, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Although God made man in his own image, he is not to be His likeness in this *Divine* particular. Should any one point out that Jehovah declared by the Prophet, "Fury is not in me," let it still be insisted on that fury is an essential Divine attribute.

18. There can be nothing in God infinitely which was not designed to be in man finitely. Our glorified Saviour, who was made unto us of God, by the transcription or sealing of the image of the Father in the Son, wisdom and righteousness, is in all things to be imitated. What the Father was in first principles the Son became in last principles (called "flesh"); and what the Son is in an infinite degree, that must his true disciple become in a finite degree, by the observance of his commandments.

19. Although the Father had a right to demand to inflict vicarious penalties on his *co-equal* Son, the Son had *no right* to demand to inflict them on his co-equal Father; nevertheless the Son, although thus inferior to the Father, is to be considered as entirely co-equal with Him, for if not co-equal, He could not be Divine at all.

19. The inferiority of the Son to the Father, or of the Humanity to the Divinity, continued only so long as infirmity derived from the virgin remained in his Humanity; after this had been entirely put off, at his resurrection, entire oneness precluded inequality; comparatively as the soul and body are equal, because each mutually and reciprocally possesses the powers of the other.

20. Although the Father's justice demanded satisfaction, and the Son's did not, it must not be thought that one had more "justice" than the other; and although the Son shewed mercy where the Father took vengeance, the mercy of the Son is to be deemed as the mercy of the Father, and the vengeance of the Father as the vengeance of the Son, lest the doctrine of co-equality and identity of essence should be violated. The reason why the mercy of the Third Person is never supplicated, nor his vengeance deprecated, if he really have the same qualities as the other Persons, is a mystery not to be inquired into: it is *the custom* of the Orthodox; and that is enough.

21. Although the First Person would not forgive man's sin without receiving satisfaction, while the Second and Third desired no satisfaction for the offence as against them, they are all three to be thought of as being somehow or other of the same mind, for otherwise they could not be equally perfect.

22. Although the Second and Third Persons demanded no satisfaction for man's sin, they must not be thought of as having less abhorrence of sin than the First Person; for although three equally wise *men* would see any plain moral question in the same light, *Divine* Persons are not to be bound by any imaginable law, and are therefore at liberty to differ with

20. Divine Justice is the undeviating pursuit of man's good, originating in that infinite and unwearied Love which first prompted creation, and which invariably proceeds according to those unchangeable laws of unerring Wisdom which from the beginning were established. There are no such qualities in the Divine Nature as vindictive justice, or wrath, for such qualities imply the absence of foresight, or being taken by surprise, which could not possibly be the case with a Being to whom all things are foreknown, and who necessarily provides according to his unerring foreknowledge, and not according to contingencies arising from man's conduct and liability to change.

21. God being essential Love and Mercy, desires to forgive every one's sin, but his forgiveness can take effect only according to the unchangeable laws of his own Divine Order, as revealed in his Word, and which laws provide, that every one shall become the recipient of Divine Love and Mercy in proportion as he obeys the Divine commandments.

22. The Lord the Creator and Saviour seeks no satisfaction *for sin*; but He seeks the satisfaction *of his own Love*, that is, the satisfaction of his desire to remove evils, and, by means of man's repentance, to save him from his sins, and thus to avert their unhappy consequences. It is thus that "He sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied" (Isaiah liii.). His love

each other, and to view a matter in different and opposite lights, without any impeachment of their unerring judgment. Should any one allege that the word "satisfaction" is not to be found in the New Testament; nor any thing like the doctrine it implies; and further, that the word "satisfaction" presupposes injury done, and no one can possibly inflict injury upon God, that is, upon Infinite Perfection,—should such reasonings be urged, they are not to be regarded.

23. Although the Mosaic sacrifices were not vicarious, and were never accepted for sins to which the forfeiture of life was annexed, they are to be deemed as exactly typical of the vicarious sacrifice of "the Lamb of God" for sins of all kinds, as well "sins unto death," as "sins not unto death." The Scriptures do not make the Mosaic sacrifices vicarious, but the Rabbins, borrowing from the idolaters, do; and orthodoxy requires that the Rabbinical traditions should take precedence of Scripture.

24. Although "God is faithful and *just* to *forgive* us our sins," because we believe in His unjust punishment of His Son, it is still to be believed that "a God all mercy is a God unjust," and that justice and mercy were incompatible in God, until harmonized by the injustice of punishing his innocent Son.

25. Although forgiveness is

seeks satisfaction in willing good to man; his wisdom, in devising it; and his power, in operating it. Love, wisdom, and power, which are the three essential attributes of Deity, are unceasingly active in promoting the eternal good of every one, according to his state and capacity, and agreeably to the constitution of his mind as a free and rational agent. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but he has pleasure in his conversion and salvation.

23. The Mosaic sacrifices were representative of the pure spiritual worship to be offered up by the Lord Jesus Christ and his true disciples; and specifically, of the worship originating from *that* principle which was represented and signified by the animal offered. They were typical of the Lord's perfect righteousness; and of his "obedience unto death," as the consummation of a life in which He always did those things which pleased the Father (John viii. 29), and thus offered a continual "sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour."

24. Justice and Mercy are but Divine Love viewed in two different aspects. God is infinitely just in performing the promise of his Love and Mercy; from which it appears, that a God *all-mercy* is a God *all-just*. Were the Infinite *not* to shew mercy to His necessarily frail finite creatures, He would be infinitely unjust.

25. God, in creating and govern-

stated in the Scripture just quoted, to be an act of God's *justice* (!) God would be unjust to Himself—were He to forgive mankind except on condition of their believing that He would *not* forgive them, and therefore punished them by proxy; for the true Orthodox view implies that God was determined not to forgive or forego punishment, but to punish *some one*; and whether the innocent or the guilty does not appear to have been a material consideration.

ing the universe, has no private ends, nor selfish views; and when it is said that he created or rules "for his own glory," it is meant, that he created man to exercise and manifest His most pure love, and disinterested desire to benefit his creatures; such manifestation being the most glorious feature in the Divine character that can possibly be conceived of by rational and benevolent beings, bearing the Divine image.

26. Although "God is Love," it is nevertheless to be believed, that the Father brandished his flaming sword to destroy mankind in the fierceness of his anger, and when his beloved and compassionate Son stepped between man and his destroyer, that He plunged it into his innocent bosom! There is nothing contradictory in this!

26. Since God is a Creator and Preserver, He cannot also be a Destroyer, for His Holy Nature cannot be the seat of contradictory passions or principles. The Son is called beloved of the Father to indicate his perfect righteousness, for nothing but righteousness can be an object of love to an all-righteous Being.

27. Although God is unchangeable in his nature and purposes, that is to be deemed no reason why He should not "change from wrath to grace when his Son's blood was sprinkled on his burning throne," and as a consequence change his unchangeable decree of wrath and destruction against man, for one of forgiveness and salvation. Forgiveness is understood by Evangelicals as a change taking place in the feelings of the Unchangeable God towards sinners; or as a change from frowns to smiles.

27. God is incapable of any change of purpose or view; He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." All change is in the creature, who is mutable because he possesses a finite and progressive nature. God unchangeably presents blessings to man; and it is only necessary that man should change from being a rejecter of them through sin, in order to his becoming a receiver of them through righteousness. God never decreed that the punishment inseparable from sin should await man any longer than the continuance of his impotence and wilful disobedience to known divine laws.

"Rich were the drops of Jesu's blood  
That calm'd his frowning face,  
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,  
And turn'd his wrath to grace."  
WATTS, Hy. 108.

28. Although the Father decreed endless punishment at the fall against Adam and all his posterity. He foreknew that His Son would induce Him to alter His purpose, and revoke His decree; but it is not at all inconsistent to believe that God in his holy wrath against sinners, decreed an endless punishment which He, nevertheless, all the while, knew would never be inflicted on the offending parties, and their posterity. It must not be asked how God could purpose that which He foreknew would never happen; or decree that which He did not purpose, merely to scare man into obedience.

29. Although only the finite part of the Second Person could suffer punishment, the suffering is to be regarded as involving infinite merit; and which infinite merit constitutes such an inexhaustible fund, that it never can diminish, however numerous the claimants upon it, who by trusting in it for their salvation, obtain an interest in it.

30. Although it be an unjust and inexcusable act amongst men, to punish a good man in the place of a bad one, we are to remember, that "God's ways are not as our ways," and *therefore* what is bad in us, is good in Him. This consideration will *show*, that his justice was eminently displayed in punishing his innocent Son in the place of guilty man. Yes! the justice of one Divine Person became satisfied, by inflicting an

28. God knew, when he made man capable of choosing good, by giving him the human characteristics of free-will and rationality, that the gift would be liable to abuse by his choosing evil in preference to good, and falsehood in preference to truth. But it would not have become the character of Divine Love and Wisdom to withhold the capacity of realizing the good, because of the accompanying and contingent danger of falling into evil. God foresaw the fall, and He so provided for man's surmounting it, as that the good resulting from his creation should almost infinitely exceed the evil.

29. The sufferings of the Lord were infinitely meritorious on account of the divine purity of the motive which actuated Him in submitting to them, namely, the salvation of the human race. The righteousness thus acquired by, and in, his Humanity, is actually imparted to the righteous by his proceeding Holy Spirit.

30. The Lord suffered, the just for the unjust, comparatively as the righteous, in their endeavours to benefit the wicked, are sometimes obliged to submit to receive injury themselves. It was thus that the Apostles exposed themselves to death in order to save souls by the preaching of the Gospel; and it was thus that the Good Shepherd laid down his life for his sheep. He suffered for them, not in the way of punishment, but



injustice on another Divine Person ! And this is called an adorable mystery !

because such suffering was necessary to be endured, in order to their redemption.

31. Although Redemption means that man was redeemed from the fierce wrath of the First Person by the merciful interposition of the Second, that is not to be considered as opposed to the statement that "God so *loved* the world as to give his only begotten Son" to save it; or to the statement that "the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil," by "bearing witness to the Truth" (John xviii. 37).

31. Redemption consisted in the deliverance of mankind from the dominion of the powers of darkness, by whom they were held in captivity, and who, by possessing men's bodies as well as minds, threatened them with universal destruction. By overcoming the infernal hosts in temptation, the Lord removed them from man, and restored him to the enjoyment of spiritual freedom, and the free exercise of a rational choice.

32. Although man *paid* the full penalty of all his sins in the person of his punished substitute, it is nevertheless to be believed that God freely, and of mere mercy, remitted the whole debt without any payment, and forgave the whole sin without any punishment; and man must not thank God for punishing him by Proxy, which was the real case; but for forgiving him without punishment, which was not the case.

32. The Lord Jehovah, by assuming our nature in the plenitude of his redeeming and saving mercy and free grace, and by perfecting and glorifying his Humanity, brought man near to Himself, or to his Essential Divinity, through the medium of his Humanity. This drawing of man to himself is *figuratively* called by the Apostles a propitiation; it is also called an at-onement; and likewise reconciliation, and forgiveness.

33. Although the Apostle says that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself," and thus that God was the *Reconciler*, and the world the *reconciled*; *this is to be inverted in stating the orthodox doctrine* of Atonement, and CHRIST is to be made the *Reconciler*, and GOD, the *reconciled*; but should the contradiction between the orthodox and the Apostolic doctrines be detected, their

33. In the work of reconciling the human nature (which God took upon Himself with all its infirmities) to the Divine Nature, God—the *whole* God—operated in the Humanity, (which was called the "Christ" because it was to be anointed with, or was to receive into it, the whole Divine Essence,) in order to remove thence the hindrances to the full union of Divinity with Humanity; and these

perfect agreement must be boldly asserted. With most men, confidence will easily pass for accuracy.

being removed, the world was reconciled by accepting the access to God provided for mankind through the medium of his Glorified Humanity.

34. Although the word Atonement is mentioned only once in the New Testament, and then it is said that "*we have received the Atonement*," it is nevertheless to be believed, that God Himself received the Atonement from his Son as the price of human salvation; and if it be urged that we, being changeable creatures, may fitly be said to receive reconciliation, for this implies a change, but to predicate such a change of an unchangeable Being is a contradiction in terms, the objection is to be treated as a cavil.

34. When the Apostle declares that God "*reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ*," he implies, that the indwelling Deity, by the medium of His Humanity, drew near to man, and re-united him in friendship with Himself: and when it is said that "*we have received the atonement*," it is implied, that by the operation of the Holy Spirit we may receive in our souls a similar reconciliation with Infinite Holiness, to that which was first wrought by Jehovah in his assumed Humanity.

35. Although the Second Person purchased full salvation for all men by his death, that is no reason why He should not be obliged perpetually to shew his wounds, and to intercede with and pray to the First Person, for the salvation He has purchased; perhaps if He were not thus perpetually to intercede and pray, the Father might relapse into his former state of wrath; or might forget his Son's sacrifice; or else it would be difficult to shew why He should intercede at all!

35. The Scripture mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ with the Father figuratively signifies the ceaseless co-operation of the Human Nature with the Divine in the Lord, in order to effect the conjunction of man with his God, by attracting him to good, and giving him all power to learn and do the Divine Will. As the Mediator, the Humanity unceasingly applies itself to receive, and convey to man, the divine communications of goodness and truth, called the Holy Spirit.

36. Although God be unchangeable, yet doth one part of him, called the First Person, need to be excited by another part of him, called the Second, or there would

36. God is ever willing and waiting, to shew mercy to all who come unto Him, and that of his own free grace, and for his own name and mercy's sake; and He

not be mercy enough in activity in God to effect human salvation. Hence, also, in prayer, this excitement must be kept up by man, by his asking the First to have mercy for the sake of the Second Person, his own mercy, without such excitement, not being sufficient to move him to save and to bless.

does shew mercy to all who prepare themselves to become the subjects of it by improving the grace and ability which are given to every willing mind, in obeying the immutable laws of eternal life which God, in His unerring Wisdom, has ordained, out of the purest regard to the good of his creatures.

37. Although the three Persons are of course counterparts of each other, or they could not be co-equally Divine, they have three perfectly distinct and separate offices called Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, but that is no reason why believers should not *occasionally* predicate *all three* offices of *each* Person, *if they please*, and offer up prayers to each accordingly. And although the Second Person be the Saviour, and the Third the Sanctifier, the First Person only is to be petitioned for salvation and sanctification (except on special occasions, but according to no definite rule,) and not the persons whose particular office it is respectively to bestow them. But should it be desired to pay special honour to the Son in order to propitiate *Him*, *He* may then be supplicated for the blessings of even Creation, as well as of Redemption and Sanctification; in short, if it is desired to propitiate and secure the blessings of each and all three, let each be supplicated and praised for *every thing*, just as if He were the *Only* Divine Person, and there were no other. Such is the approved practice of the orthodox;

37. Creation was effected by the Invisible Jehovah, but in order to effect Redemption, He made Himself visible as Jesus Christ, it being necessary that He should be "*made flesh*," in order to His becoming liable to temptations as a man, in which He might overcome the tempter and so "*destroy the power* of Him that had the power of inflicting death and destruction, that is, the Devil," and thus *redeem mankind*, and at the same time might sanctify His Humanity, as He said, in order that He might afterwards *sanctify us*, by His Spirit of Truth proceeding from His Humanity. The Lord Jesus Christ is therefore to be supplicated alone and exclusively for all the blessings of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, because, even as to His Humanity, He has "*all power* in heaven and on earth;" and because Jehovah *now* operates all things from His Visible Humanity which before his Incarnation He operated from his Invisible Essence. He indicated that His visible Person was thenceforward to receive the worship previously addressed to Him as the Invisible God when he said, that "*all should honour* the

but still there are not three Son even as they honoured the Gods! Father."

38. Although it is said in Scripture that Jesus has power to forgive sins, we must never so believe this as to be led to supplicate Him only, or even directly, to forgive our sins *Himself*; for the forgiveness of the Son goes for nothing, except the Father confirms it by *his* forgiveness; it is the Father's forgiveness only which we need to ask, for that of Jesus, by itself, is of no value; we may, however, ask Him to ask his Father to forgive us. No orthodox Christian offers up any petition to his Saviour for any thing but his intercession, except on very particular occasions.

38. Jesus hath power to forgive sins because He is the Omniscient Searcher of all hearts, even as to his Humanity; and consequently confession of sins, with supplication for forgiveness, is to be addressed to Him exclusively. His Humanity is "the way" by which alone His Divinity can be approached and worshiped; and this He indicated by saying, "No man cometh unto the Father except by me." He also declared, that all who climb up to the Deity by any other way than Himself, are thieves and robbers, He being the Door by which only his sheep can enter in to the heavenly sheep-fold.

39. Whatever difficulty may appear to attend the hypothesis of three co-equal Divine Persons, it is quite enough to meet any objection with the plea of "Mystery." It appears that the Father *would not* forgive, and that He received satisfaction; that the Son unconditionally forgave; and that the Holy Ghost never forgives any sin whatever committed against Him, and, consequently, does not consider the atonement of the Son, as offered to Himself, but only to the First Person. He however does not take any offence at any sins committed against the other Divine Persons. Such is the necessary construction of Matt. xii. 31, upon the hypothesis of a Tri-personality; and although the difficulties attending it may not apply to a different

39. When it is said that all manner of sin shall be remitted to man, on repentance, excepting the sin against the Holy Spirit, which cannot be forgiven either in this world or the next, we are instructed, that after a man, by continued transgression, has rendered of none effect the means provided for his salvation, in the teaching of the Word and the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, he cannot be saved, because no other means of salvation can be provided for him. By offences against the Son of Man are meant mistaken and derogatory views of the Lord Jesus Christ on account of his appearance in the world resembling that of an ordinary man. The sin against the Holy Spirit is incompatible with any remaining tenderness of con-

hypothesis; the hypothesis of three Persons must nevertheless be adhered to without wavering, and without listening for a moment to any other doctrine.

40. Although it is impossible to conceive of sin being committed against one portion of the Divine Essence (existing in three Persons) without its being committed equally against all the Persons or parts of that indivisible Essence, yet it is to be believed, that the sin of Adam was offensive to and against the First Person only, between whom (exclusively) and Adam the covenant of Eden was made. And although the Second Person is the Head and Lawgiver of the Christian church, the orthodox faith requires that the breach of *his* law should be regarded as a sin—not against Him the Lawgiver,—but against the First Person, to whom therefore all confession of sin is to be made, and from whom alone pardon is to be supplicated.

41. Although the Divine Essence or Nature is one and the same in all three Persons, yet it is to be believed, that the First forgives sins for his Son's sake; the Second, for his own sake; and the Third,—not at all. How this consists with the unity and identity of Essence in all three, is not to be inquired into. The more mysterious and contradictory the things are which are to be believed, the more meritorious it is to believe

science. See Heb. vi. 4, and the marginal references opposite to it, for sundry kinds of that incurably sinful state of mind which is denoted by the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit.

40. God was always One Divine Person, and always will be. As He was only One Divine Person before his incarnation, so his assumption and glorification of Humanity could have no other effect, than the investing of the Divine attributes as they existed in first principles, with the lowest principles of a man in the world; so that God is still One Person, even as a man is one person. When our Lord said to his disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," He did not mean to say, "Ye believe in three Persons, believe also in a fourth," but He meant, "Ye believe in Jehovah as He existed in his invisible Essence before his incarnation, henceforth believe in Me, who am His manifested Form, His Divine Essence brought forth to view.

41. When man had departed from the Father by sin, the Father came, in the form of a Son, "to seek and to save that which was lost." In consequence of the Father and Son having become, by the glorification of the Son, absolutely a One, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and Son, or the Divinity and Humanity, enters into every man; but whosoever, after instruction, by an habitual evil life, *confrms* himself against the Divine

them ; such is the testimony of the pious Luther.

Spirit within him, is said to quench the Spirit, and cannot be saved.

42. Although the three Persons are each infinite in Love, because "God is Love" in each and all of his Persons, yet the First will not grant mercy for his own sake, but only for the sake of the Second ; neither will the Third sanctify any soul for heaven at the moving of his own mercy, nor until the mercy of the First has been moved by the mercy of the Second so to direct.

42. The mercy of God our Saviour is infinite, because His Love is infinite ; and His *mercy* is the aspect of His Love to the evil and wretched ; and his *grace* is the aspect of the same Love to the good and happy. The Lord's Love and Mercy are like Himself incapable of limitation or change, except, indeed, so far as the laws of Divine Order may be said to prescribe bounds to their activity.

43. Although the First Person alone commands, and the Second *was* obedient, and still is dependent, and the Third *is* obedient, yet it is to be believed that "*In this Trinity none is afore or after the other ; and none is greater or less than another.*" It is not to be held as any contradiction that, although the Three Persons could not be Divine unless they were independent, the Second Person is always described as if dependent upon, and the Third, as submissive to, the First.

43. In the Lord, His Humanity, as being external respectively, may be said to be inferior to his Divinity, in the same way as man's body is inferior to his soul ; but inasmuch as all things of the body belong to the soul, and all things of the soul belong to the body, for the common use of both ; therefore, in this sense, the soul and body in man are equal ; and so likewise are the Divinity and Humanity of the Lord. (John xvi. 13, 16.)

44. Although when Trinitarians, on ordinary occasions, speak of the acts and purposes of God, they always mean by the word "God" the First Person *only*,—entirely excluding from their thought at the time the Second and Third Persons as having any part in such acts and purposes,—it is not to be admitted that Trinitarians capriciously set up Three Persons as "God," or One Person as "God," without any

44. The word "God," and "Lord," always should mean, when used by a Christian, our Lord Jesus Christ only ; or, what is the same, the Lord Jehovah in his Humanity ; for in this meaning is included the whole Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or the Eternal Divinity, the Divine Humanity, and the Holy Proceeding. In attaching this meaning to the word "God" and "Lord,"

rule to guide them, and that they either conform to the Trinitarian Doctrine, or violate it in practice, just as caprice or fancy may suggest!

45. Although God be undoubtedly Three Persons, yet the word "God" does not *always* mean three Persons; for *at the commencement* of a prayer the word "God" may mean the whole three Persons, or it may mean the First Person *only*, accordingly as the other Person or Persons may, or may not *happen* to be named *at the conclusion*; for if They, or He, be *then* named, then the word "God," at the beginning must mean the First Person *only*; so that if the prayer be *extempore*, the *hearer* cannot tell whether he is to mean by God, One or Three Persons, and thus whether he is praying to One Person or Three, until the prayer be ended. If he should happen to think of all Three Persons at the beginning of the prayer, and the officiator should happen to use the words "for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ" at the end of it, then the Second Person will be made, in thought, to be the Son of the whole three, of which Himself is One, whereas He is the Son of the other two *only*.

46. Although the Lord said to his disciples, "to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," but not to those who are without, that is no reason why the nature of the Divine Trinity should not be considered as an im-

there is no manner of uncertainty or ambiguity! the idea presented to the mind, is the idea of God as He *is* since His Incarnation.

45. In acts of worship, the proper idea to be entertained respecting God as the Object of worship, is, the idea of the Infinite glorious Divine Man, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Divine Essentials constituting the Divine Trinity, and which are united in Him, can no more be divided in any Divine act, than the essentials of a man's nature, or his soul and body, can be divided in any human action, which is only complete by their union; consequently, to think of the Essential constituents of the Trinity as separately existing, and as acting separately, is to think of them in a manner contrary to their real nature, and, therefore, in such a manner as to prevent the influx of Divine Truth from entering into the mind; or to suffocate it on its entrance; for there can be no correspondence, and thence conjunction, between God as He is, and a dark and erroneous state of thought respecting Him. What fellowship hath light with darkness?

46. The Lord, when in the world, promised that at a future time He would shew his disciples "plainly of the Father." That time has now arrived, and that which is perfect having come, that which is in part, or that which was

penetrable mystery which cannot possibly be known : and although the understanding of divine mysteries is certainly a mark of true discipleship, whosoever shall attempt to understand the mystery of the Trinity must be regarded as a heretic.

47. Although the Bible is truly called a Revelation from God, it is not to be imagined that it reveals Divine truths so as to cause them to be plainly known and understood, but only that it sets forth certain mysterious verbal propositions, in order to their being believed without being understood ; that is, to be confessed with the lips, without any ideas being attached to the words in the mind.

48. Although Revelation is given to guide reason, any effort of the reason to understand the truths which are to guide it would be presumptuous ; for reason is dark and corrupt when it attempts to open its eyes ; but it is luminous from the light of Revelation when its eyes are closed. The understanding must be kept in obedience to faith, which takes place when faith is dark, and the understanding is so likewise. The Divine things revealed relating to God are necessarily above our reason, and to attempt to see them would be like straining our ideas to discern things beyond our vision. If it be objected that what is above reason cannot guide reason, because there is no contact or connexion between

47. All that the Word of God reveals, is presented to man in order to its being seen in the understanding, loved in the heart, and obeyed in the life ; for what is not seen cannot be loved ; and the rule of conduct which is uncertain, cannot be certainly observed and obeyed. Words without ideas are nothing better than dumb idols, having no life in them. Truths are lucid ideas, and not mere words.

48. There must needs be a correspondence between Revelation and reason, as there is between light and the eye ; and since light is of no use to the eye when it is closed or blind, so neither is Revelation of any use to an inactive, and therefore darkened understanding. To read Revelation without using reason, or without endeavouring rationally to understand it, is to treat it as an irrational book, and to insult that Divine Wisdom in which it originated. Doubtless the Revelation of God is adapted, and brought down to the reason of his creatures, for otherwise God would act less considerately and mercifully than a kind and wise human instructor, who always adapts his counsels to his



the two, the objection is not to be attended to.

pupils' capacity. What is beyond a person's capacity cannot possibly reach him so as to benefit him either spiritually or morally.

49. Although a brute animal cannot know anything of Divine Truths, for want of reason, while a human being cannot know anything concerning them *intelligibly*, because they are above reason, it is not therefore to be denied that man has *infinitely more light* concerning God than a brute has; and should any one allege, that, according to the statements of the believers in unintelligible mysteries, the real difference is only this, that the mysterious words suggest *no* ideas to the talking bird which is taught to utter them, while they suggest *no intelligible* ideas to the believer, and that there is no great difference between having no ideas at all, and having no intelligible ideas, the allegation is not to be regarded.

49. Man has an interior principle of perception and thought which a brute has not, by virtue of which he can think of, and rationally discern, the things relating to God, and to the human soul, and can form abstract and purely spiritual ideas concerning the qualities of good and evil, truth and falsehood, happiness and misery. It is by virtue of this interior principle that man lives after death;—in heaven, as an angel, if it has been perfectly developed by the external man being made subject to the internal; and in hell, like a ferocious or filthy brute, if it has been neglected and abused by a life of evil, and the consequent dominion of the unregenerate external, with all its defiled propensities and dark persuasions.

50. Although the bishops in "*The Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity*" circulated by the "Christian Knowledge Society," scout the *philosophy* of those who believe not in three Divine Persons as "heathenish," and define their *reason*, as "the sagacity of a brute animated by the malignity of an evil spirit," yet is reason to be lauded so long as it is applied only to scientific subjects; for to apply it to religious subjects is to profane them;—to *think* that we understand the Scriptures is the same as to misunderstand them, because

50. There is the most perfect harmony between genuine religion, and genuine science and philosophy; because all orders of truth are alike from God, who, as a God of Order, has created all things from highest to lowest in mutual dependence and connexion. Hence there is a correspondence between the spiritual things of religion, and the natural things of science and philosophy; so that while spiritual things illuminate natural things, natural things confirm, and, by analogy, illustrate spiritual things. By the exercise of his merely

they are a mystery which no college learning can fathom, and not even bishops can understand: in *this* respect, they and the clown are on a par.

natural powers, no man can acquire spiritual truth; but by means of Revelation it can be received into the rational and natural mind.

51. Although people cannot understand their creed, vital religion requires that they should be kept in active thought about the *words* of it, for this is called saving faith; and faith is most evangelical when it has least of reason mingled with it, and is most strongly perceived as incomprehensible, and even contradictory. The belief of what we do not understand is peculiarly acceptable to God; and it is the office of ministers to repeat at stated times the unintelligible propositions which are to be believed, after having been *duly* prepared to repeat them by receiving a classical and mathematical education; besides ministers are thus enabled to hide the otherwise repulsive contradictoriness of their doctrines, under the pleasing guise of well selected language. If, when Evangelical believers assert that their doctrines are *above reason*, and *therefore* not intelligible, it should be replied by an objector, that if they were above reason, no ideas whatever could be entertained about them, but it is plain that ideas, although incoherent ones, are perceived, and therefore that the incomprehensibility arises not from their being above reason, but from their contradictoriness, this objection is not to be attended to.

51. If the words used are not understood, and yet are believed, the believer cannot tell in this case whether he believes truth or falsehood! All words not really understood, whether they be words in the Bible, or of "the unknown tongues," are equally without light and equally fail in imparting substantial knowledge. A Rational Faith is the belief of genuine Truth, inwardly seen in rational light. Not to possess reason, and not to use it, is the same in effect; but the latter involves crime.—What we do not understand, we do not know, and if we believe it, we believe we know not what. It is therefore the duty of a Christian to "prove all things" which he is required to believe, in order that he may "hold fast that which is good," and "be ready to give answer to every man who asketh a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and deference." Whatever is understood enters into the constitution of the mind, but what is not understood abides without in the memory of mere words. An incomprehensible faith is a merely verbal faith; it is also an abuse of language; for the proper use of words is, to convey ideas with clearness, truth, and effect.

52. Although the Gospel is figuratively called a light unto the Gentiles, and a light shining upon those who were sitting in darkness, that *light* is no otherwise to be thought of than as a *dark* and mysterious doctrine altogether incomprehensible to those who are enlightened by it: and although no instruction can possibly conduce to edification unless it be understood, nothing is so edifying as the "Evangelical" paradoxes commonly called "the Gospel," which neither teacher nor hearer can possibly understand.

53. Although God could, if He so pleased, make every man good and heavenly-minded by a word speaking; and although this would be doing the best for man that Omnipotence could do; yet God's not doing so, but leaving millions to perish whom He might save if He would, does not release them from the obligation to believe that God is *infinitely good to them*, which is the same as believing that He could not possibly do better for them than when he suffers them to go to hell, although He might save them if he would, and take them to heaven.

54. Although God has declared that He will judge all men according to their deeds, the real truth is that he will not do so, but will judge them according to their faith; for He will judge to eternal life all those, and those only, who believe (or think they believe) what is absolutely unintelligible by reason

52. The Gospel is a revelation of the Divine Wisdom, or of that Truth which is able to make us "wise unto salvation" from sin; but so far as this revelation is misunderstood, or not understood, its light is shrouded, and its purpose is suspended or defeated; and so far as it is not understood at all, it cannot exercise any effective moral influence upon us. God can only be beneficially imitated, and his likeness attained, so far as his nature is clearly and certainly known, and his acts rightly described.

53. God is *willing* to save all without exception, and if it were consistent with his gracious designs towards all men, He would *compel* all to be good; but inasmuch as the compulsion to be happy is an impossibility and a contradiction in terms; and since therefore it is out of God's power to make any one happy against his will, or except through the medium of his own rational and free choice, God is, and can be, infinitely good to all, only by leading them according to their particular state and capacity, and so as never to violate their freedom of will and choice.

54. The judgment of every man after death is according to his deeds, because such as the will is, such is the whole man; and the will is such as are the acts, and not such as are the opinions, unless the opinions are consistently acted upon. Every man's acts are accepted so far as they are grounded

of the contradictions it contains. A belief in the evangelical paradoxes is far more acceptable to God than obedience! It is not to be thought as inconsistent with the doctrine of a judgment *according to the deeds* done in the body, that God should condemn *all* who believe not the paradoxes, whether their deeds have been good, or whether they have been wicked, and notwithstanding their unorthodox faith may have been most conscientiously adopted.

in a religious intention, and are performed according to the best of his knowledge of what is acceptable to God. So far as truth is understood, opportunity exists to do right, for truth reveals and points to what is truly good. Regeneration is therefore not attainable without truths, and hence it is said that "without faith, it is impossible to please God." No one can please God who knows not how to please Him.

55. Although God will impute his Son's Divine Righteousness to wicked people just as if that righteousness were their own, provided they believe that His Son was righteous and yet that His Father punished Him in the place of guilty man, God is to be regarded as imputing or thinking *truly*, when He thus imputes the wicked to be divinely righteous; and as judging justly, when He imputes the unorthodox righteous to be wicked, and deserving of hell fire, because they are not orthodox.

55. God enables man to do good *freely*, by enabling him to do it *in appearance as of himself*; and the good he thus does is imputed to him as if it were his own, although, in reality, it is of the Lord, and is the Lord's. This is "the righteousness which is of God by faith," and which, through the "obedience of faith unto righteousness," is imparted by the Lord, and is appropriated by man, during acts of obedience. Imputation is according to good and evil, and not according to faith or opinions.

56. Although a man should not become fit for heaven by personal holiness; nor yet be liable to condemnation in hell, because he has obtained forgiveness through faith in the paradoxes; and although he would thus apparently, or according to the orthodox statement, neither be a fit subject for heaven nor hell, it must not be admitted that there is any difficulty about the final condition of *such* persons after death; for if a difficulty

56. By that forgiveness of sins which is granted to man on his believing, is to be understood the first spiritual state after repentance has been entered upon sincerely, and in a state of mental freedom; not in the prospect of death, for then the mind is in a state of compulsion, through the fear of eternal punishment which then appears imminent. In this first state a man receives power to become a child of God, and if, in the least

should be admitted, it would endanger the Protestant doctrine of "justification by faith only." The believer may believe, if he can sufficiently defy the testimony of experience to do so, that God will make the dying sinner holy at once, by an inconceivable miracle of grace, in consequence of his believing.

57. Although every spirit after quitting the body is thereon adjudged either to heaven or to hell, every one will be *judged over again* when his body is raised; but this second judgment, although without any additional matter for judging, is not to be thought a redundant or unnecessary formality, but a solemn testimony to the spectators that the first judgment was a just one; for inasmuch as they did not witness it, they might not be disposed to take for granted that it was a just judgment, even although God Himself was the Judge! Let no one presume to ask, *Why* this second judgment is to take place. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is a question which *might* seem to shew that the *first* judgment can require no revision by a *second*; but the orthodox consider this as nothing to the purpose.

58. Although man was created expressly to bear the likeness of God's love and goodness in his affections and habits, yet God will dispense with this qualification for heaven as originally designed and required by Himself, (however es-

degree, he is in the actual use of this power by freely shunning evil as sin when death overtakes him, he is certainly saved. Every one will be rewarded according to his works, that is, according to his state, as resulting from the obedience he has practised. As is the holiness, so will be the happiness.

57. The judgment which is passed upon every man or spirit after death, will be his final judgment. But it appears from the Scriptures, that judgment has been deferred, at particular periods, upon certain classes of departed spirits, until there has been an accumulation awaiting judgment in the middle region of the spiritual world, between heaven and hell, and that, at certain periods, *general* judgments on such accumulations of spirits have taken place there. Such a judgment took place, it appears (John xvi. 11), at the Lord's first advent, and the last general judgment is predicted as to take place at his second advent, prior to the descent of the "New Jerusalem." The manner in which the general judgments are mentioned in the Word shews that they take place in the spiritual world, and not in the natural.

58. No one will be able to abide the pure intensity of the Divine presence in heaven, unless he be clothed with that "wedding garment" of charity and faith which is formed by the Lord for man, during his co-operation with the

essential it may be to the *enjoyment* of heavenly happiness,) and will admit the habitually wicked man into the society of the spirits of the just, (but whether he can afterwards *abide* the intense purity of the Divine presence is another consideration,) provided only that he believes the paradoxes, or declares his assent to them on his death-bed, in some orthodox form.

Divine Operation by acts of obedience; and by virtue of which he becomes a likeness of the Divine Love as to his will, and as to his understanding an image of the Divine Wisdom. This is the only and indispensable preparation for admission into the society, and for a participation in the activities and joys, of "the spirits of the just made perfect."

59. Although *a man* is justly esteemed wise because he prefers good deeds to mere opinions or verbal professions, God is to be esteemed more wise than any wise man, because he does just the reverse, and because he prefers *orthodox* opinions to every thing else, and saves all who happen to hold them when overtaken by death, while He condemns to hell all virtuous men who do not hold them, whether Heathens or Mahometans,—and especially *unorthodox* but virtuous Christians, who dare to hold intelligible opinions, and to think for themselves; for orthodox and paradox always go together, and he who dares to separate paradox from orthodox, "shall, without doubt, perish everlastingly!"

59. Every one whose will is principled in any sincere religious good, the offspring of religious intention carried faithfully into practice, however erroneous his religious views may be, will be able to abide in heaven, after he has been instructed in heavenly truth, because he has obtained some interior conjunction with the Divine Good Itself while upon earth, by means of the good he has thence received; but no one can be interiorly conjoined with the Lord by means of his opinions or faith merely, however accurate they may be. Good heathens, good Mahometans, and good mistaken Christians, will be received and instructed by the angels, while *true* believers, who are nevertheless evil doers, will be cast out.

60. Although there are three Divine Persons who *severally* claim to be the Objects of man's whole, supreme, and undivided affection, so that man is bound to love each of them as much as if there were only One to demand his entire love, it is no objection that this is quite as impossible as it would be for a

60. The Lord Jesus Christ is the sole Husband of His church, and every man of the church is called to love the Lord with *all* his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; and this he could not do if the Lord were not One and Indivisible. A divided love is necessarily a diminished love. The church loves

woman who had three Husbands, to love *each of them* as devotedly as if she had but One! When it is said that God is the Husband of his church, it is meant that the church has three Divine Husbands, or at least two; but if any one say from Scripture (Rev. xxi. 9), that the Lord Jesus is the sole Husband of the church, and presume to ask, how the spiritual bride can love two others besides her husband without committing spiritual adultery, he is a heretic.

the Lord as a Husband when she depends upon His protection, trusts in His faithfulness, looks up to His wisdom for counsel, and reposes on his love, and faithfully and affectionately performs all the duties which she has covenanted to perform, as His spiritual bride. That which is true of the whole church is true of each member of it; for the fidelity and dutiful affection of "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," is that of all, and each, of the members of His church.

61. Although all men are required to obey the Divine commandments, it is not to be supposed that any one is able to do so, but that God will be satisfied if men only believe that He punished His innocent Son in their place. This faith is particularly effectual on the bed of death, because then a man can have no opportunity of obeying. And although he has not any love to goodness to fit him for heaven, and heavenly society and joy, faith will save him from hell, nevertheless, and that is something.

61. God has laid upon his creatures only such commands as He has given them full power to comply with. He dealt less strictly with the Israelite than he deals with the Christian, (Matt. v.) because he has given to the latter an increase of light and power by means of His Holy Spirit.—Divine Love cannot be satisfied with faith only, because this cannot possibly be the ground of heavenly happiness; it is a sincere and ardent love to do good which alone renders a man like God, and consequently which alone can render him a partaker of the Divine blessedness.

62. Although personal and practical holiness must be admitted to be *necessary* to salvation *in addition* to faith, still salvation must always be attributed to faith *only*; and although "pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is, to visit the fatherless and widows in affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from

62. Faith without works is dead, for it is only when a man shuns evil, and does good, in the fear of God, or from a religious motive, that God makes his faith living by uniting with it the living principle of charity. Charity (so called) without faith, is not true charity; and faith (so called) without charity, is not true faith;

the world," this religion will not save, but faith without "pure and undefiled religion" will save: and although it is said by an Apostle, that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," still justification by faith *only* must be resolutely maintained, for this is what distinguishes the Protestant from the Roman Catholic, who trusts for his salvation to "pure and undefiled religion," as above described by the Apostle.

and neither faith nor charity has any life in it but from the Lord. Charity and faith are together in good works; and are merely ideal and perishable things unless they be determined to good works and co-exist in them, whensoever it is practicable. Charity alone does not produce *genuine good* works, and still less does faith alone, but charity and faith together produce them.

63. Although Charity be described by an Apostle as greater than faith, yet charity without orthodoxy is not saving; but, on the contrary, an orthodox faith without charity, and even when united with the most malignant bigotry, provided it be called a godly zeal, is unquestionably saving: it is no contradiction to suppose that what God pronounces to be "the greatest" in his esteem, is least acceptable to Him; and even to such an extent as not to be at all conducive to salvation; nor is it at all inconsistent to suppose, that what He pronounces to be the least of the Christian graces, is the *only* sure ground of a Christian's hope.

63. Charity is greater than faith, because it is "the end of the commandment," while faith in the commandment, and in its Divine Author, is but the *means* to that "end;" and as the end is greater than the means, so charity is greater than faith. Charity is also greater than faith in this respect, that by virtue of it, considered as the pure love of goodness, man is made like God, but he is not made like God by virtue of faith only; therefore faith without charity is not saving, but only faith grounded in charity.—Hence the Apostle says, "above all things put on charity, which is the bond (or cement) of all perfections."

64. Although believers are convinced that they are *unable* to obey God's commandments, it is not to be accounted any proof of insincerity, that they confess themselves morally guilty, just as if they could obey them, and would not: for although they may not really think themselves the

64. A man ought to examine his thoughts and actions, and also the intentions of his will, by a serious comparison of them with the Divine Law; and the evils he thus discovers, he ought humbly to confess before the Lord, supplicating Divine aid against them in future, in order that he may



guilty persons they say they are, or as being guilty at all according to any fair principle of judgment, their confessions may *move* God to mercy—if he should not look upon their hearts.

shun them as sins against God. Man ought not to account himself guilty, excepting when he has sinned against light and knowledge, by *cherishing* evil thoughts, and carrying them into action, as he found opportunity.

65. Although man is intended to become like God by the imitation of Him, he must on no account imitate the First Person in God by being angry, or by punishing the innocent for the fault of the guilty, calling it the satisfaction of his justice; but he must imitate the opposite example of the Second Person, in shewing mercy; now, although this be the case, whoever shall assert that these two Divine Persons are of opposite dispositions, is guilty of blasphemy. It is a mystery!

65. The more perfectly a man is acquainted with the Divine Nature and conduct, the more closely will he be able to imitate God, and by the imitation of Him, grow into his resemblance. In God all the Divine qualities are summed up in the word *Love*; and all the Divine power, in the word "*Wisdom*;" and all these are most perfectly harmonious. So, also, in the regenerate man, love is the spring of his goodness, and he is in spiritual power by virtue of the truths of wisdom in which he is principled.

66. Although no faith can be true which impeaches the Divine immutability by imputing to God that which is inconsistent with the unchangeableness of his nature, it is no argument against the old paradoxes, which rest on the sure basis of antiquity, that every thing which they affirm and call "orthodox," possesses no consistency but this, they all unite in violating that essential attribute of God,—the Divine Immutability.

66. It is the great and peculiar ground for Christian confidence, that God is immutable, and that "God is love;" and it is the unquestionable characteristic of all that is predicated of, or attributed to, God in the doctrines of the New Christian Church, that every thing most entirely agrees with the fundamental truths, that God is One, and God is Love! This is the sure ground of hope and confidence to a Christian of the "New Jerusalem."

When Job, with a grateful heart, and a glistening eye, glanced over the striking contrast between the contents

of these columns,—between the *Old Paradoxes* and the *New Truths*, he thought within himself thus:—When I was a Unitarian, I was made sensible of the paradoxical nature of the Trinitarian creed; but although I was then able to bring many weighty allegations against it, it was not *then* in my power to substitute for the dogmas I rejected, the clear, and beautiful, and edifying conclusions from Scripture, which are contained in the “*New Truths*,” that form the belief of the *New Christian Church*. And here I perceive a striking difference between the Unitarians and the *New Church*, in regard to the formation of their respective systems of doctrine. Both systems unite in rejecting the Tripersonal paradoxes; but while the Unitarian system consists of little else than mere negations, that of the New Church establishes a distinct affirmation of Truth, in the place of every erroneous doctrine which it denies. It not only rejects the mistaken interpretation of what may be called the *Trinitarian’s* passages of Scripture, but it offers a perfectly rational and fair interpretation in its place. Not so the Unitarian System. This, while it repudiates the Tripersonal interpretation of Scripture, offers no other interpretation that has a shadow of claim to attention *for its fairness*; and, therefore, in effect, it leaves the Trinitarian’s passages to absolute neglect, affirming nothing on their authority, and drawing no conclusions or doctrines from them. I wonder, said Job, how upright and intelligent Unitarians can satisfy their consciences in professing to believe passages to be authentic, and therefore binding upon them, and which, as a consequence of such profession, lay obvious duties upon them, which they never think of performing! Many are the gracious promises which the Lord Jesus Christ has left his faithful followers: but, what is remarkable, Trinitarians, who profess to believe in His Divinity, and Unitarians who deny it, exhibit the same neglect of those promises! Both seem equally to mistrust His faithfulness or ability to perform them; and both pass Him by, in not asking *from Him* the fulfilment of them, and address their supplications to His *Invisible* Father instead of Him. It is a lamentable fact, that the duties naturally arising out of the Lord’s declarations are equally neglected by those who confess Him to be

God, and by those who deny Him! "*Without me,*" said our Lord, "*ye can do nothing.*" But what Unitarian, or even Trinitarian, acting on the obvious obligation implied in these words, ever supplicates the Speaker of them for the assistance he promises? The Bible, also, closes with the encouraging words, "*The Grace (or favour) of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all!*"—"grace," however, which is never sincerely acknowledged, never supplicated, never depended upon, and, consequently, never experienced, by the whole body of Unitarians, and nearly the whole body of Trinitarians! Very trifling indeed is the exception which is formed by the few petitions which are put up to the Lord Jesus Christ, for *His* grace, by a few Trinitarians, at a few odd times, from some sudden impulse to depart from the usual practice of addressing the Father only. *Such* an exception to the universal neglect of asking Jesus Christ for *His* grace, is, indeed, too trifling to be seriously named.

Another mode of placing the truth in a strong point of view, with which our friend delighted himself, was this: he placed in opposite columns the declarations of Jesus Christ Himself on which the Trinitarians and Unitarians respectively build their doctrine concerning His nature and person, as follows.

|                                                                                                |                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>The Trinitarian's Passages, by which the Divinity of Jesus is supported and maintained.</i> | <i>The Unitarian's Passages, upon which the denial of the Divinity of Jesus is grounded.</i> |
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| <p>I am <i>the</i> Truth, and <i>the</i> Life.<br/>         I am <i>the</i> Resurrection, and <i>the</i> Life.<br/>         I am <i>the</i> Light of the world.<br/>         As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth, even so the Son quickeneth whom <i>He will</i>.<br/>         As the Father hath <i>Life in Himself</i>, so hath he given to the Son to have <i>Life in Himself</i>.<br/>         Before Abraham was <i>I am</i>.<br/>         Destroy this temple and <i>I will</i> raise it up (speaking of "the tem-</p> | <p>Of mine ownself I can do nothing. The Son can do nothing of Himself.<br/>         My Father is greater than I.<br/>         I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.<br/>         Father, not my will but thine be done.<br/>         I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent me.<br/>         The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.</p> |
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ple of his body," and which Paul says, "was raised by the glory of the Father").

I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.

I and my Father are *One*.

All things that the Father hath are mine.

The Son of Man hath power to forgive sins.

As the Father knoweth me, *even so* know I the Father.

I know you . . . I know my sheep.

He (Jesus) knew all men . . . He knew what was in man.

All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

Without me ye can do nothing.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, *there am I in the midst of them*.

Lo! I am with you always.

Whosoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, *that will I do*.

*I will send* the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, unto you.

I will not leave you comfortless; *I will* come to you.

*I give* unto my sheep eternal life.

In me ye shall have peace.

. . . My peace give I unto you.

Come unto *me*, all ye that labour, and *I will* give you rest.

I go to prepare a place for you.

The words that I speak unto you, I speak not *of myself* (or of my own prompting).

The Father gave me commandment.

I do always those things which please the Father.

It is my meat to do the Father's will and to finish his work.

I must work the works of Him that sent me.

The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth the Son all things that Himself doeth.

As my Father hath taught me, so I speak.

As I hear I judge.

My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

The Father hath *committed* all judgment to the Son.

The Father hath given all things to the Son.

Thou Father *hast given* the Son power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him.

I am come in my Father's name.

I live by the Father.

The glory thou gavest me.

I seek not mine own glory.

I honour my Father.

Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; thou hearest me always.

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

Our friend Job looked down the Trinitarian's passages, (and it is hoped that the reader will carefully do the same) until their import and general tenor was fully impressed upon his mind, and then he exclaimed, I think I hear some Trinitarian while contemplating these passages

exclaim :—" Can words more plainly declare the Divinity of our Saviour than these words declare it? They shall be the foundation of my belief ; and I will pay no attention to any objections founded on passages of a *different tenor*. I could wish, if I dared, that those passages had never been written : if our Saviour had revealed Himself to me in the above words *only*, I should have perceived in them a revelation of all that I need to know of Him, and certainly, of all that is laid down in the Trinitarian creed. What should I require more to guide my judgment, kindle my devotion, or establish my confidence? Had it not been for other passages of a different tenor, and which only serve to embarrass those who desire to rely on the passages which affirm the Divinity of Jesus, and to bring the latter passages into doubt and question, there would have been no captious, persevering Unitarians to harass the true believers with their everlasting objections. Here is a Being, in the form of a man, who tells me that He is ' the Life ' by which I live ; ' the Truth ' by which I am inwardly enlightened, and outwardly taught : He declares that whom He will, He quickens ; that He possesses all things, and all power ; that He can forgive sins ; can grant prayers ; and that he is everywhere present to promote His own merciful designs ; and by His Omniscience is acquainted with all his creatures' wants and weaknesses ; and that He gives eternal life to whomsoever He wills. Certainly this Being must possess Divinity ! But then there are two other Divine Persons who do the very same things which He does,—but that is a mystery, and, as such, I must dismiss it. As for the contrary passages, which declare the absolute dependence of this *Divine* Person upon another Divine Person, as if He had no Divinity properly His own, even if I refer these passages exclusively to His *Human* Nature, that will not explain why the manhood passed by its own Divinity,—the Divinity of the Son, which was *personally united* with it, to petition the Father's Divinity, which was *not* personally united with it,—but I must also dismiss such a puzzling consideration as this, and remember, only that the whole subject is a mystery on which it is useless to dwell ! I will fix my mind exclusively on the passages which attest the Divinity of the Saviour, and forget that any exist which appear to impugn them."

And then Job looked down the Unitarian's passages,—and the reader will be pleased to do so likewise,—and he fancied he heard a conscientious Unitarian exclaiming: "How could any man in mortal guise use such expressions as those which fell from the mouth of Jesus,—expressions of dependence upon, and devotedness to God,—or make such declarations of emptiness, and impotency, if separated from God, if He were indeed God Himself? But then there are passages of a different tenor, on which the Trinitarians build the doctrine of the divinity of the Messiah; these arrest my attention. What is to be done with them? They must be explained away some how or other; or else be entirely passed over! If it were not for these passages,—which really teach nothing that contributes in the least degree to the completeness of the Christian, that is, the Unitarian system, the Christian Church would be essentially united, and Trinitarians, with their impenetrable mysteries, their bigotry, and their anathemas, would be unknown! I must however admit that, in those passages, the Christian Redeemer does appear to lay claim to divine powers which, in practice, I am accustomed to deny Him to possess! He declares his will and ability to do certain things for my benefit, and on that ground He calls upon me *to love Him*, as likewise does his Apostle Paul; but how am I to 'love' Him, while I merely regard him as a man who has died, and has been taken to heaven as a reward for his virtues? We do not say we love the dead, but only that we venerate their memory. While I refuse to believe in His Omnipresence and Omniscience, I must disregard all his promises to befriend me (in some personal way unknown to me) while I am upon earth, and while, as appears to me, I am at so great a distance from Him, that He can know nothing about me. What, indeed, *can* He know of me, my wants, and of the wants of all? It is true I acknowledge him to be 'the Head of the church,' but I see not how He can perform the functions implied in his office without Divine powers, and yet I cannot suppose so high an office to be a nullity,—an empty name! At any rate, here are two classes of passages quite opposite to each other in their testimony respecting the character of the Messiah. I find that one class so describes Him as to

lead me to believe that He was, and is, a mere man, though a very superior one; and this class I adopt as the basis of my belief; but as for the other class,—I dismiss it at once and for ever, as too mysterious for me, and quite beyond my comprehension. Let those who have ingenuity enough amuse themselves with explaining these passages away; but for my part, I think it best to let them quite alone.”

And so it is, said our friend, that, in effect, the Trinitarian comes and strikes out the Unitarian’s passages, by treating them with entire neglect, and drawing no doctrine whatever from them; and the Unitarian does the same by the Trinitarian’s passages; and so *between the two*, the whole Doctrine of the Scriptures concerning the Person and Character of the Lord our Saviour is rendered of none effect, and *practically* obliterated! O how anxiously did the good Doctor Watts pray for light to understand the subject of the Trinity, even after he had advocated the Tripersonal Doctrine with the utmost confidence through the medium of the press! How strongly did he protest after all, that this doctrine is no where clearly declared, or even fairly to be inferred, in any part of Scripture! How intensely did he plead with his Maker in the agony of his soul, that, if possible, he might be shewn the true meaning of the Word, in reference to the important subject of the Divine Nature.\* Had this excellent Christian been alive now, how affectionately and zealously would he have embraced “the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem!” Here he would have found the apparently conflicting passages brought into such agreement as to send forth one beautifully harmonizing strain, to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, even

\* See Dr. Watts’s “Solemn Address to the Great and ever-blessed God on a Review of what he had written in the Trinitarian controversy,” and which is to be found at the end of his “Improvement of the Mind” printed for Rivington, in 1801. In many later editions this testimony to the unsatisfactoriness of Orthodoxy, in the view of one of the most candid, upright, and intelligent of human beings, is *prudently* suppressed.

as to his Humanity, hath "all power in heaven and in earth!" He would have seen that both classes of passages relate entirely to the Lord's Human Nature; that those which lay claim to Divine Powers, or the Trinitarian's passages, contain the expression of his Divine-Human feelings in his *states of Glorification*, when He was *consciously One* with the Father or Divinity within Him; while those passages which express dependence and inferiority, and even confess infirmity, and which I call the Unitarian's passages, the Lord uttered during his *states of humiliation and temptation*, thus conveying the expression of His, as yet *infirm* human feelings, arising from the activity of his infirmity from the mother, and through which He seemed to himself, for the time, *to be entirely separated from* the Father. It was these feelings which moved Him to cry out at the last, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" How simple and how plain the whole of the passages become, when this key to their meaning is obtained! Not one of either class can be spared. Each one is an indispensable living stone, essential to the stability and beauty of the spiritual edifice, the Temple of Divine Truth! The member of the New Church cannot part with even one of them. There is not one of them but what is dearer to him than his very life! The Trinitarian's passages reveal to Him the ample grounds for his dependence upon the Divine Humanity as his manifested God, for every good which he can rightly desire, or beneficially receive; while, on the other hand, the Unitarian's passages reveal to him the astonishing love and condescension of the Lord God his Redeemer and Saviour, in going through the consciously painful and trying states which it behoved Him as a man to suffer, in order to make his Humanity Divine, and the medium of pouring out the Spirit of grace upon mankind. The same passages also solemnly remind him, that they describe a process of purification which he himself must pass through, in order that where the Lord is, there may His servant be. And thus he is led to feel, that he must first suffer temptations with his Saviour, in order that afterwards, they may be glorified together! Unlike the member of the Old Church who contemplates Jesus



Christ only in his humiliation, as if he were eternally hanging on the cross, the member of the New Church, after having contemplated the *temporary humiliation* of his Saviour with lively gratitude and wonder, proceeds to elevate his thoughts to the continual and habitual contemplation of Him *in his eternal glory*, and to which He has been exalted in consequence of his "obedience unto death." Here is a grand distinction. The Old Church gloomily contemplates a crucified human Saviour (human as to that which was crucified); while the New Church joyfully adores her *now* Glorified and Divine Saviour, as God over all even as to his Humanity, and remembers his gracious words, "*Because I LIVE, ye shall live also.*"

We have now only to remark respecting our friend Job Abbott, that he remained in connexion with the *New Christian Church* at Loughborough about seven years, daily increasing in the knowledge of, and attachment to, her doctrines; and also growing, as there is good reason to believe, in practical wisdom and goodness, and in the experience of peace, calm serenity, and happiness. And although a large share of outward trial and bodily affliction fell to his lot, this he humbly and piously converted into the means of promoting his spiritual and moral improvement, by the exercise of patience, and resignation to the Divine Providence. About six months before he was removed into the spiritual world, his strength gradually decayed, and he felt that he was about to undergo the last and all-important change. This he contemplated with lively hope, and silent joy, tempered with humility, and heightened by gratitude. This was remarkably evident when he was in the near prospect of death, as was shewn in the language which he held to a lady who visited him, and who had long known his worth. After he had settled his worldly affairs, he exclaimed, "Now I have done with the world, and am perfectly happy. My Lord and Saviour found me in my low estate and raised me up. I am now going to be with Him; and live in that state of happiness where I shall be more useful than I can be in this world." Upon being asked,

whether there was anything of the nature of religious instruction or consolation that he desired, he replied to the inquirer (the New-Church preacher in the town), "*You have supplied me with this already, and the work is now done.*" This reply, given as it was with peaceful calmness, testifies, that the faith of the *New Jerusalem* is one which brings peace in death, provided it has previously been allowed to conduct to an humble and pious rectitude of life. Such, indeed, was the language our friend uniformly held during the short period, only one week, in which his illness became serious. He had a constant and grateful sense of joy and rejoicing,—accompanied with a calm and even state of the feelings, and the ground of his joy was this,—that his work had been done before his illness. To a question put to him on the day of his departure, whether he held fast to the faith of the New Christian Church, he pleasantly replied, "*Do you doubt it?*" He departed in peace at Loughborough on the 14th day of July, 1839, and in the 49th year of his age.

Our friend left various MS. papers behind him, and an examination of them fully proves, that he had made a good progression in the spirit and life of the new doctrines, as well as in the knowledge of them. Previous to his acquaintance with the New Church, he had sometimes manifested a somewhat confident, rash, and condemnatory exercise of the judgment, as appears from some of his papers; but under the blessed influence of the *new* doctrines, he gradually acquired habitual feelings of meekness, kindness, patience, and forbearance. As a proof that such was the frame of his mind, some extracts from his papers are now presented to the reader, and first, one of the prayers which he had written for his own use. The truly Christian reader, of every denomination, will rejoice to perceive, and not without feelings approaching to amazement, how great a deliverance Job Abbott experienced from the woes of doubt, darkness, infidelity, and despair, into which he had fallen; and to what a height of wisdom and peace he had been conducted, by means of the *Doctrines of the New Christian Church*. The nar-

row and heartless sectarian will, of course, deny that in embracing the new doctrine, he made a change for the better; but it is scarcely probable that persons of such a description will have patience or candour sufficient to read this work through, or to give a fair examination to the evidences which his papers afford of Job Abbott's sincere piety and purity of heart, his deep thought, and clear intelligence. We commence, as before observed, the *Extracts* from his papers, and *which have been faithfully copied*, with

#### A PRAYER.\*

"O my God, I believe in Thee; do thou strengthen my faith. All my hopes are in Thee, do thou secure them. I love Thee with all my heart; help and keep me in this love, and in that of my neighbour, for thy name's sake. I adore Thee as my first beginning; I aspire to Thee as my last end. Thou art my constant Benefactor. I give Thee thanks as my sovereign Protector. I have sinned against Thee; have pity upon me! Conduct me by thy wisdom; restrain me by thy justice; comfort me by thy mercy; and defend me by thy power. Inspire my thoughts; control my words and actions. Let thy will be done in all things in the manner thou wilt, because it is thy will. Enlighten my understanding; inflame my will; purify my body; and sanctify my soul. Give me strength to subdue my passions, and to acquire the virtues proper for my station. Fill my heart with affection for thy goodness, hatred of my faults, and contempt of the world. Make me prudent, meek, humble, patient, courageous, and constant.—Let my conscience be pure, my conversation edifying, my

\* It may not be amiss to remark, that although Job Abbott perhaps never averaged more than six shillings a week wages, and that obtained by constant toil, he found time to improve his mind in the knowledge of words as well as of things. His MSS. are mostly clearly written, always accurately spelt, and well pointed; and, as will be seen, the arrangement of his ideas shews that his mind had learned to think with order and accuracy, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of his worldly condition. His attention indeed appears to have been attracted to almost every department of knowledge. Some acquaintance with the Latin tongue is indicated in his writings.

deportment regular. Assist me to elevate nature to correspond with thy grace ; to keep thy commandments ; and to work out my salvation. Discover to me the nothingness of this world ; the greatness of heaven ; the shortness of time ; the length of eternity ! So may I escape hell, and, in the end, obtain heaven. Amen."

# MEDITATIONS AND REFLECTIONS.

(Dated in May, 1836.)

"There is but One God, in whom is a Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour,—whose high and holy name is JESUS CHRIST.

In order to enter into life I must keep his commands. I must worship Him as my first Beginning, and last End,—

1st, By Faith, which makes the understanding and the will embrace and reverence all the truths He has taught ;

2ndly, By Hope, which honors His infinite power, goodness, and mercy, and the truth of his promises, by exercising a patient and firm reliance on his Providence, and favour ;

3rdly, By Charity, which teaches us to love Him with our whole heart for his own sake, and also, for his sake, our neighbour as ourselves."

.....  
 "Jesus called me into being merely of his own goodness : He had no need of me : He has given me a being capable of eternal life, and of being perfectly conjoined to Himself. '*Because I live, ye shall live also.*' To this end he has given me an understanding to know Him ; a memory to be mindful of Him ; and a will to love Him ; and if to this gracious intention I conform, He will reward me for ever with his lovely aspect, and inspire into my heart the eternal delight of being for ever conjoined with Himself, who is the Supreme Good which encompasses those who love Him and serve Him, with indescribable pleasure. '*Where I am, there shall my servant be also.*' I am now between heaven and hell ; He will open the former to receive me, and deliver me from the latter,

if I choose to comply with his conditions. *'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.'*”

“Fly idleness. The Almighty appoints to every one his respective employment. When you are at work, let your interiors be open to the Lord. Be not over-anxious, but do all with coolness and peace, if you would have the God of peace be with you. Let your meals support nature. In conversation be edifying; be not ostentatious; neither praise nor dispraise yourself; there is vanity and self-love in either.”

“Father! all-good, thou giver of delight intense, I speak of thy beneficence! It is thou who instillest spirit into my nerves, and strength into my bones. Thou pourest into, and from the heart, pure blood. Thou hast endued me with thought and volition; a will to bring the muscles into action, and an understanding to direct them. Thou, O Lord, art our Father in very deed and in truth. Natural parents cannot produce life; they can only supply forms adapted for the reception of life. It is the Divine Power operating upon the new-born infant, that develops the senses; and when the five doors of sensation are opened, by which we are rendered capable of holding communication with outward objects, it is the Lord who admits those objects into the mind under the form of ideas, and these, by the Divine Mercy, are stored up in the memory for the use and composition of the astonishing principles of thought, reflection, and understanding. It is to the Divine Mercy alone, operating in the centre of our being, that we are indebted for the producing cause of the formation and growth of our bodies before birth, and afterwards for the formation and growth of our minds; to it, also, we are indebted for the beauty, symmetry, and perfection of our corporeal frame;—and for the superior faculties of thought, reason, and intelligence.”

“Man is a complex of forms for the reception of life, one form being more interior than another, and each existing from another; the will constitutes one form; the understanding another; science and the senses another; the

faculty of speech and action another ;—all of them having a distinct perfection according to their capacity of receiving life from God, proximately or remotely. Thus it appears that man, from first principles to last, or from inmost principles of mind to outermost principles of matter, is a complex of forms, so connected, and arranged, and adapted to each other, as to effect the descent of life from one to another. The inmost form, which is called the will, was created to receive and make manifest the Divine Love; the next interior form, which is called the understanding, was created to receive and make manifest the Divine Wisdom; and the more exterior form, called the memory, to be the receptacle or storehouse of all the perceptions and thoughts which are communicated to the will and understanding, and to preserve them for future use. The organic forms by which the faculties of sense, speech, and action, are brought into activity, are instrumental to the former forms, and receive life from them; and the whole of these forms are continually dependent upon the Lord for their life, for He is the only Life, and dwells in the very centre of our being. Remember, O my soul, that the true way of worshipping God is to worship Him in thyself, and not merely out of thyself. While others look to a God out of themselves, let me, O most merciful Father, look to thee within myself; and let me, in the exercise of my reason, and in the discharge of the business and duties of life, ever find thee near, that in the use of my talents in every thought and work, I may consider Thee as the Principal, and myself as the instrumental, yet free and responsible agent."

"*What is Property?* Is it consistent with reason, truth, or common sense, to call that property which may be taken away from us every moment? Can, then, a man's body or estate be called property, except in a very restricted sense, since they are liable to be taken away by death without even a moment's warning? It is the soul only which can be called property in any correct sense, because it only possesses the capacity of inheriting all things; as is clearly expressed in those beautiful and emphatic words in Rev. xxi. 7: '*He that overcometh shall*

*inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*' It is the distinguishing feature in the nature and character of man, that he can be raised from the lowest sensual basis to the highest spiritual summit. During the early period of infancy, the delights of sense are the only things that stimulate; by degrees the organs of the body gain their full growth and activity; in the period of infancy and boyhood, the senses receive into their storehouse, the memory, from surrounding objects continual increment, and with the increase of the number of ideas and images, there is also an increase of the activity and accuracy of the perceptive powers, and these are the materials for the formation of the future man, and they are stored up for a time for future use, when the rational faculty shall be opened at mature age. When a sufficient store of these rudiments is collected through the instrumentality of the senses, a new source of delight is opened by the operation of the natural affections, such as the affections of love to parents and companions, and an eager desire for the attainment of knowledge. And now commences the period of introduction into scientific, civil, and moral life; and after this, the pages of the Eternal Truth begin to claim the Christian's serious attention. At first divine truths impress his understanding, and afterwards they affect his will, and operate on his love and affections. Thus he is admitted to feast on *'the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die'* (John vi. 50). He then discovers, and becomes deeply interested in that cheering and delightful truth, that the Divine Providence of the Lord hath for its end,—*to form a heaven out of the human race!* He perceives that the Lord created man in pure love and mercy, and in such a manner that he can, and may, if he be so disposed, be more and more closely conjoined with the Lord, and so become happier and happier to all eternity. The Providence of the Lord, in all that it does, has respect to what is infinite and eternal. It has no more respect to things temporary than as, and so far as, they respect things eternal. The conjunction of things temporary and eternal is (says the great Swedenborg) the Divine Providence of the Lord. Consider, O my soul, what noble and exalted prospects are placed before the man who sub-

mits himself to the divine government, and who, by co-operating with the divine operation, is brought into divine order! His is the glorious privilege of eternally advancing in wisdom and knowledge, in love, purity, and felicity; and through a blessed eternity, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day! His states of wisdom, holiness, and bliss, must have their commencement in this world, but they will never reach their termination, because the powers of the soul are such as to admit of a gradual and everlasting increase, and of an eternal progression in the things of the heavenly kingdom. The mind is, indeed, a house not made with hands, a building of God eternal in the heavens."

"The Christian's song is an everlasting song, a song formed of new and more elevated truths, arising from a new spirit, a new heart, a new nature, a new name. The Lord alone can teach this song (Rev. xiv. 3). This song consists of the following particulars:—

1. The Divinity of the Lord's Person.
2. The inconceivable Dignity of his Character.
3. The Infinity of his Love and Wisdom.
4. The Immutability of his Nature.
5. The Greatness of his Power.
6. The Faithfulness of his Promises.
7. The Tenderness of his Compassion.
8. The Universality of his Goodness.
9. The Glory of his Word.
10. The Splendour of his Victories.
11. The boundless Extent of his Empire.
12. The Eternity of his Reign.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who alone art God, to thee be glory for ever!"

"I have passed a restless night, during which I have thought much of the mind, and of the bodily forms and organs thence resulting; as, of the eye and its connexion with the eye of the mind; of the ear and its connexion with spiritual hearing; of the taste, smell, and touch, and their connexion with the mental perceptions and affections; on eating and drinking, and the spiritual eating and



drinking of the mind, by which goodness and truth are appropriated; on digestion, absorption, secretion, excretion, &c., and their corresponding mental operations; on bodily sleeping and waking, and the mental states analogous to them; on the heart and lungs, and their correspondence with the will and understanding; on the correspondence between the voluntary and involuntary motions of the body, and the voluntary and involuntary principles of the mind, its affections and thoughts; on walking and resting, sitting and standing, and the spiritual states corresponding to them; on bodily health, sickness and death, and the corresponding states of the spirit: but perhaps of all these bodily acts nothing is more inexplicable than that of sleeping, unless it be that of awaking. In a moment, without any effort, (for effort would defeat its own purpose,) all our thoughts, activities, delights and interests, apparently perish, and we become not only unconscious of existence, but utterly unable, of ourselves, to recall our consciousness. How astonishing, that when we have lain some time in this helpless and insensible state, we are suddenly aroused, without any care or effort of our own, to the renewed enjoyment of our mental and bodily faculties, attended with the new creation, as it were, of all our thoughts, activities, delights, and interests, and they so closely connected with the foregoing day, that we are not sensible of any interruption or suspension of them by sleep! Every man may, indeed, be said to die and rise again once in every twenty-four hours. As during sleep the interior organs of the body perform their functions, sleep may be considered as a temporary cessation of the voluntary and intellectual activities. Both sleeping and waking are altogether independent of man, and any effort of his. Whence, then, do the causes of them originate? For these we must look above or out of man. It is said in the Word, '*I laid me down and slept: I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.*' Again: '*He giveth his beloved sleep*' (Psalm iii. and cxxvii.). It appears, then, that the origin of sleeping and awaking is with the Lord, perhaps mediately, or through the medium of angelic beings. Is it not a fact, then, that our sleeping and waking less depend upon ourselves than upon those superior intelligences of whom it is written,

*'He shall give his angels charge over thee;'* and *'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them?'* And what are dreams but a kind of awakenings during sleep to an ideal vision, accompanied with exquisite sensations, sometimes of inconceivable delight, at others, of the deepest misery, and both surpassing whatsoever is seen or felt in our waking hours? How can we account for sudden gusts of involuntary pleasure or pain occurring at a time when we can neither come nor go? The only way to account for such things is, that we are in some secret communication with other intelligences, both good and evil; the one enchanting us with inexpressible delight, and the other alarming us with indescribable horror. Our very dreams, then, are collateral proof that the sleep, in which all dreams originate, is an effect produced by the agency of angels or good spirits, to whom is entrusted the care of us, and the office of closing and opening our eyes each returning night and day. Blessed be the Lord God my Saviour for all his wonderful provisions for the good of his creatures!"

"This is my birth-day (May 19, 1836), but being at Gilmorton attending on my insensible and dying mother, it is a melancholy one. Since I have been an inhabitant of the earth, 46 times has she completed her annual round; 569 times has the moon filled her horn; 16,755 times has the earth revolved on her axis; I do not know that I can do better than record my feelings on this day by embodying them in Addison's beautiful *'Hymn on Gratitude,'* (commencing *'When all thy mercies, O my God'.*)"

We conclude with presenting to the reader some of the overflowings of our friend's pious feelings, expressed in verse: these productions were written about a year before his death.

*"Have faith in God."*

*"Behold I have set my bow in the cloud."*

*"Lo! I am with you always even to the end."*

There is a principle within,—

Faith in God's love and power,—

Upon this moveless Rock I lean  
In sorrow's darkest hour.

This oft my drooping heart hath cheer'd,—  
With anguish worn, and care;—  
And all I doubted, all I fear'd,  
Have vanish'd into air!—

What though a clod o'ershade my sight,  
Big with affliction's tear;  
Yet faith, amidst the drops that fall,  
Discerns a rainbow there.

I need not shrink, I need not fear,  
Whate'er the future be;  
Since God is love, and God is near  
In man's extremity!

*Alphabet of some of the Divine Characters of the Lord Jesus Chs*

My All in all, below, above,  
My Benefactor, filled with love;  
My Captain, all my foes to quell,  
My great Deliverer from hell;  
The End of all I have in view,  
My Friend, unchangeable and true;  
To realms of heavenly bliss, my Guide,  
My Haven, when by sorrows tried;  
Immanuel, the Great I Am,  
Jesus, the sin-removing Lamb;  
Keeper of Israel, night and day,  
The Light, the Life, the Truth, the Way;  
The Mighty God, the Only Lord,  
The Name by heaven and earth ador'd;  
My One thing needful thou shalt be,—  
The Prince of peace art thou to me;  
Quickener art thou of all within,—  
Refiner from the dregs of sin;  
My Shepherd, Saviour, Sun, and Shield,  
The Tree of Life which fruit doth yield;  
The Vine from which the branches grow,  
The Well whose waters overflow;

In Zion thou art First and Last ;  
My Yea, Amen, both sure and fast.

Such was the intelligent and estimable character of Job Abbott of Loughborough ! and such was the bounty of the Giver of all good to a poor stocking-maker,—not a perishable and transient bounty of gold and silver, but an imperishable and ever-during bounty of goodness and truth, heavenly love, and heavenly wisdom,—a bounty infinitely more valuable than precious stones, because imperishable and eternal !

May the reader of these pages have humility and candour sufficient to discover and correct his errors ! May he prove willing to change his opinions when he can do so for the better ; and may he be led to sit at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ as his only Divine Teacher, and account it his One thing needful to learn, and do, his blessed Word ! And may his eyes be opened to behold the surpassing glory of the heavenly doctrines of the *New Jerusalem* !



## APPENDIX.

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*The following Observations and Propositions are designed as an Antidote to the bigotry and intolerance which necessarily arise from a confirmed belief in the doctrine of salvation by faith ONLY.*

To say that bigotry and intolerance necessarily accompany any particular system of belief, appears at first sight to be itself bigotry and intolerance: the case, however, appears otherwise when the *proviso* laid down in the Preface to this Publication is recalled to mind,—that any one individual may rise superior to the errors he has adopted, by the diligent practice of Christian virtues, and thus *may be* individually better than the erroneous creed of his class; and consequently, be an exception to those of his associates, who regarding more the false notions of “the body” they are connected with, than the practical precepts of Scripture, fall into the particular evils to which their particular false principles naturally tend. But we think it may be fairly concluded, considering the fallen and wayward tendency of the mind by nature, that a *majority* of every class of persons holding *false* opinions will be likely to fall into *the evils to which those false opinions naturally lead and incline*.

We are not, then, justly chargeable with illiberality for making the above assertion until it can be proved, either that false opinions have *no* bad or injurious tendency; or that the particular belief in salvation by faith only has no tendency to make its adherents intolerant. In speaking of solifidians as a class, it may be observed, we speak not *personally*, but abstractedly from the persons composing that class: we speak of principles, their character, and tendency.

It must appear, we conceive, to the reflecting mind, that it is the tendency of all religions which make *faith* to be the *only* ground of hope for salvation, and of admission to divine favour, to lead their adherents to persecute those who are of a different faith, in some way or other, in thought, in word, or in deed; *for even to think unkindly of another personally, in consequence of his conscientiously adopted faith, is a species of persecution*. But let us examine this matter a little closely.

He who believes that God regards his creatures with favour for, and according to, their *good intention* in believing, or, what is the same, according to their regard to his will, their probity and moral purity, *will himself value all such persons* for the same reason, and will estimate his fellow-creatures *according to the same rule*. Whatever a man thinks God to be, or to do, must have a considerable influence upon his imitative faculty, in the way of example.

But he who thinks God's favour is confined to individuals of a certain faith, only, and that He accounts all others as reprobates, will himself, in reference to both classes, insensibly fall into a way of feeling and thinking, estimating and acting, similar to that which he attributes to God; thus following, as he thinks, the perfect example which God has set him. So far, therefore, as decency allows, and the spirit of the times permits, he will account all those who differ from his *exclusively* saving faith, *however exemplary their lives*, as being vile in reality, and as being reprobates already doomed to the torments of hell. Once let a man put his fellow-man, even only speculatively, beyond the pale of divine love, mercy, and favour, and he will not be long before he will practically, and in a greater or less degree, according as the spirit of bigotry prevails in him, proceed to exclude the supposed object of divine reprobation from any active share in his own individual sympathy, kindness, favour, and friendly regard. He will naturally think, that he is only furthering, and carrying out divine purposes, by holding up the mis-believer, and whom *he* will call an unbeliever, to the dislike, contempt, or even scorn of his fellows, on account of the supposed faults or imperfections of his religious faith. He may, indeed, occasionally forbear, and say "it is not for us to judge;" "God only knows the heart!" But does he not, by the use of such language, violate his own principles, and thereby practise deception possibly on himself, and certainly on others? If his leading principle concerning saving faith be accurate, let him not fear to carry it out, by honestly telling those who reject his religious principles, what he inwardly thinks of them, namely, that they are, on account of such rejection, the accursed of *God*, and since we ought to love those whom God loves, and hate whatever he hates, they *ought*, so long as they reject this only saving faith, to be accursed of men also. Surely it is not within probability that consistent and cordial love can be felt by a solifidian towards any one whom he regards as wanting in that true faith which, as he believes, alone procures the favour of God, and alone produces that holiness which is the gift and evidence of Divine favour. All virtue springing from any root but this, he *must* account, if there be any consistency in his understanding, as nothing but a base counterfeit of Christian character, even as Satan is said to assume the appearance of an angel of light. He will not

be content with rejecting merely the *opinions* deemed heretical, but he will, and must, necessarily reject the *persons* of the heretics, by withholding every mark of his favour or personal regard which he can withhold, consistently with his worldly reputation and interest.

Being thus solemnly persuaded that the origin of all bigotry and intolerance is the unfounded belief, that particular opinions (called "faith") are the only way to secure divine favour,—a belief which harmonizes with all that is selfish, proud, and vain-glorious in the fallen heart of man,—we beg to present, with a view to assist in the removal of existing causes of intolerance, the following

PROPOSITIONS respecting FAITH, and its connexion with salvation, and acceptance with God.

I. An honest conviction, founded on a careful examination of the Scriptures, *that God hath so said*, is a sincere faith in the Author of the Scriptures, whether the doctrinal conclusions arrived at be accurate or otherwise.

II. But a belief in any doctrine or Scripture interpretation, *whether true or false*, on the authority of any *body of men*, called a church, and without a due examination of Scripture testimony, *is a faith in man*, because it is a faith in merely human inferences, and cannot be deemed a sincere and personal faith in God. It is at the best a merely childish faith, resembling that of a child in its parent, or teacher, and which, compared with the proper characteristics of a sincere, active, and personal faith, *is no faith at all*, wanting all the proper efficacy of a saving and sanctifying faith.

III. While a man's faith is nothing more than a faith of childhood, it is *in his mind* without being *of his mind*; for although it is in his memory, it forms no part of his proper intellectual and moral being. Faith can only enter into the constitution of a man's reason and judgment, by the actual exercise upon it of his powers of reasoning and judging.

IV. Prior to faith being confirmed by the free exercise of the reasoning powers, however a man may think a particular doctrine to be *his own*, it is remembered by him in reality merely as the faith *of his teachers*; or as something which he was taught in his childhood to consider and call his own faith: he is not aware that it never can be *his own* until the proper evidences of its truth have been duly examined, and thus a conclusion upon them individually formed. The *truest* system of religion is, *to the individual* who professes it, little more than a superstition, so long as it rests merely on prescription, without any desire to examine its evidences.

V. After a due examination, faith, for the first time, acquires a *reli-*



*gious or divine sanction* ; for previously to this the only sanction it possessed was *merely human and worldly*.

VI. So far as faith has a *religious* sanction, it is connected with God, and becomes a medium of improvement in *his* hands ; but so far as it has only a *human* sanction, it is cut off from connexion with God by various selfish and self-complacent considerations which closely adhere to it, or which enter deeply into its composition.

VII. If an honest conviction, *that God hath so said*, essentially constitutes a *sincere* faith in God, no man can have a *right to demand* that *his own* interpretation of Scripture, or faith in God, shall supersede another's faith in God, on the plea of its greater accuracy, or on the ground of its higher authority ; for this would be to displace a faith in *God*, or a faith in what it is conscientiously believed God teaches in his Word, by a faith in *some man* who assumes to be God's interpreter ; it would be to demand that a resting on God's authority should give way to a confidence in that of man.

VIII. The utmost that an objector to another's faith has a right to do is this,—respectfully to suggest grounds for a re-examination of the Divine Oracles. This is the only proper relative position of Christian controversialists ; and such a suggestion ought to be kindly received, as an evidence of Christian charity.

IX. If a man humbly endeavours to learn God's will from the Scriptures *that he may do it*, and ascertains it to the best of his judgment, and believes, and determines by God's help to act according to it, *as then believes with a good intention*, and *his good intention constitutes the pure essence of his faith*, and renders it *essentially* an acceptable, because a sincere faith in God, and therefore a *saving* faith ; it can no more be destroyed, or changed, by its being connected with *wrong* conclusions, than a good mind can be affected by its connexion with a deformed body, so long as the body possesses a competent use of its members and senses. There must be *some* portion of intellectual and practical truth connected with the *good intention of believing*, however much there may be of error, and *this* will suffice, *because of its connexion with God*, for the purposes of salvation.

X. If these conclusions be just, all *honest* convictions, whether of Catholics or Protestants, Trinitarians, Unitarians, or New Church Christians, inasmuch as, by virtue of their good intention they constitute a sincere faith in God, are *so far equal* in the sight of Him, who is "*no respecter of persons*." Their *inequality* arises from the difference in their capability of promoting that spiritual and moral excellence for which man was created, and on account of which Revelation was given ; and this difference depends upon the *degree of their agreement or disagreement with the mental and moral powers which are to be*

*acted upon and guided by them ; or, in other words, it depends upon the degree in which they are true.*

XI. The nominal acceptance of a creed, *however true it may be in the abstract*, on the authority of any man, is not, properly speaking, faith at all, for it is destitute of all interior moral efficacy ; but a faith in God, as above defined, is morally efficacious *even beyond the extent that it is true*, because the Scriptures shew, and reason suggests, that pious acts *believed to be required by God*, but not *really so required*, are accepted *as if they had been required*, in virtue of the *good intention* or conscientiousness from which they spring. Hence, also it follows, that if God respects man's conscience, even although it be erroneously formed, *Christians are bound to do likewise.*

XII. A sincere faith, or sincerity and good intention in interpreting Scripture, is of more account before God than an *intellectually true* faith, or a right interpretation considered by itself, because the latter derives all its acceptability and moral efficacy from the former.

XIII. The idea that faith derives its acceptableness before God *from its truth only*, is the narrower view of faith, as determinable by its agreement with certain forms of dogmatic theology. The advocates of this narrower view see no value in good intention, and deny that conscientious conviction is, of itself, of any value before God. Such a conclusion is bigotry, and the origin of all religious persecution. The bigot estimates the value of faith only by its agreement with his own interpretation of Scripture, or with that of his party.

XIV. Faith thus estimated becomes the occasion of personal hostility, and of open or secret contempt, towards all who differ from it. The bigot despises the conscientiousness of every one's conviction out of his own party ; attributing the choice of what *he deems* error, to the influence of the devil, acting upon an unbelieving *heart*. Persuading himself that his own faith is full of God, and that the faith of others is full of the devil, he cannot help concluding that others are undeserving of Christian and *brotherly* respect, sympathy, and charity.

XV. This *narrower* view of faith, because its value is determined only by its alleged accuracy of interpretation, disagrees with and banishes all liberality and charity in judging of another man's interpretation of Scripture ; and totally excludes the possibility of improvement in the science of theology, by free and friendly conversation and discussion.

XVI. But the *broader* definition of *acceptable* faith in God, as depending entirely upon *good intention* in believing, manifestly agrees with and tends to charity, because it recognises the claim to brotherly love of all who intend well, and it judges that all must intend well who keep

the moral law, because it dares not determine by any other test who does or does not possess a sincere and saving faith, for this can be discerned by Omniscience only. According to this *enlarged* view of faith, no doctrinal form of faith whatever, considered by itself, can be the occasion of destroying the soul which possesses, from the Fountain of good, *the spiritual life of a good intention* in believing.

XVII. It is said by those who grant no validity to any faith but that which *their own* interpretation, or that of their party, has drawn from Scripture, that *this* faith alone produces charity and good works, by which conclusion they confine to their own party exclusively all religious virtue as well as knowledge! But what is the productive power in faith? What is the germ from which alone spring the buds, blossoms, and fruits of righteousness? Clearly it is nothing else but *good intention in believing*. This is the only fruitful beginning to act well, according to the will of the Creator. Take away this living germ, and the interpretation or faith which remains, however accurate it may be, is nothing but a seed whose vital power has been scorched to death by the infernal heat of self-love in the furnace of self-complacency. Good intention is heavenly love in its incipient state, and gradually it becomes that love; and from first to last it gives to faith its vitality and its holy activity, according to the Apostolic axiom, "Faith worketh [or rather is made operative] by love."

XVIII. Since *good intention in believing* is that which alone makes faith acceptable to God, and therefore saving, it follows, that it also makes faith to be *living*, and therefore, under God's blessing, productive of good works. But it must be provided always, that such faith commences in a state of health, and thus of freedom, and not of sickness, and thus of compulsion. Since no man can possibly be competent to deny the existence of *good intention* in another unless rendered questionable by an evil life, therefore no man ought to condemn another as unacceptable to God merely on account of his faith. Whether faith be living or not by virtue of good intention, is known only to God. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." Although we cannot know the quality of others' intentions, we are at liberty to judge of them according to their works, as members of *civil* society. The Good Samaritan, by reason of his "fruits" of kindness, was declared to be neighbour to the wounded man whom he succoured; all, therefore, who resemble him, are our neighbours, and are entitled to be regarded by us with brotherly love and charity, whatever their creed; but all who do evil, are *the enemies* of God and man, because they are enemies to goodness; these latter, therefore, we are not required to love according to the precept "love thy *neighbour* as thyself," but according to that other precept, "love your *enemies*, and do good to them which hate you;" and thus

between these two precepts all mankind are comprehended, and are, as it were, embraced in the arms of Christian love.

Not until these principles concerning faith become universal among Christians, will bigotry hide its hideous and detestable head. The spirit of the age seems to promise that, ere long, they *will* become universal; and prove themselves, through a thousand pens, to be the only genuine principles of the Holy Scriptures. When this has taken place, charity will unite all in a kind, generous, and holy brotherhood. Those whom similarity of charity has united, on the ground of a reciprocal love of goodness, cannot then be disunited by differences of opinion concerning religious subjects. Indeed it will be found, that the degree in which goodness is loved in any case, will lead the individual in a corresponding degree to the perception of truth, both in respect to purity and lucidity, for truth is the pattern, and also the index which marks the manifestation of goodness. Hence those who are in similar kinds and degrees of good, so far as their minds are left free and unbiassed, will always have a tendency to the adoption of similar conclusions and views respecting religious subjects. The good of charity ruling in the will, by its necessary influence upon the thoughts of the understanding, is the cause of the adoption and retention of all genuine spiritual truth; and, on the other hand, the evil of self-love ruling in the will, by its necessary influence upon the thoughts of the understanding, is the cause of the adoption, and (making due allowance for prejudices) the retention, of all false and injurious opinions.

We cannot better conclude these observations, than by citing the following admirable passage from the *Arcana Cælestia* of Swedenborg (n. 2385).

"Let this truth be received AS A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE,—*that love to the Lord and charity towards our neighbour are THE ESSENTIALS on which hangs all the law, and concerning which all the prophets speak, (as expressly declared by the Lord Himself in Matt. vii. 12; and xxii. 40,) and thus that love and charity, by a necessary consequence, are the essentials of all doctrine, and the essentials of all worship.* In this case, the mind would be enlightened by innumerable things contained in the Word, and which (supposing the opposite doctrine of salvation by faith alone to prevail), would lie concealed in the obscurity of a false principle. Yea, in case this truth regarding love and charity were universally to be acknowledged as fundamental, all hurtful heresies would vanish and be done away; and out of many distinct churches there would be formed one comprehensive and united church; for however their doctrinals and rituals might differ, they would all either flow from the above essentials concerning love and charity, or have a tendency

towards them. Supposing, then, this to be the case, although in all kingdoms there might be a difference as to doctrinals and rituals, the Church would still be **A ONE**, because charity would be held as the chief essential in all: and hence all would be governed *as one man* by the Lord, for all would be *as members and organs of one body*, which, although they are not of similar forms, or similar functions, have nevertheless relation to, and are dependent upon, one heart, and that both in general and in particular, and be their forms never so various. In this case, too, *every one would say of another, in whatsoever doctrine, or in whatsoever external worship he might be principled, 'THIS IS MY BROTHER.* I see that he worships the Lord; and that he is a good man!'"

A BRIEF ACCOUNT  
OF  
EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

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CONSIDERING the extraordinary character and pretensions of this every way illustrious individual,—illustrious equally for his talents and his virtues,—there certainly is no man who presents to the reflecting mind a more interesting object of contemplation. Indeed there is no man who is regarded in such opposite lights by persons possessing, if they would equally use them, equal and competent means of judgment; and no character on whose writings unquestionably depend more important consequences.

Swedenborg is best known in this country as a theologian, and while regarded only in this light is often depreciated by the ignorant multitude, who take their opinion from common report, or the statements of his religious opponents. But as he was at the same time an eminent natural philosopher,—a circumstance but little known in this country, though his fame for scientific attainments is fully established on the continent,—we shall first introduce him to our readers in the latter character, which combined with the other affords matter for speculation to deep-thinking and philosophic minds; such as are not in the habit of solving difficulties by bold and arbitrary conclusions, but are willing to investigate fairly the origin of extraordinary manifestations of mind, and of original views and conceptions of things, little attended to by the bulk of mankind.

Emanuel Swedenborg was the son of the Bishop of Skara, in Westrogothia, in the kingdom of Sweden; he was born at Stockholm, January 29, 1688. His father's name was Jesper Swedberg; but the name of his son Emanuel was changed to Swedenborg, (according to a Swedish custom) on the occasion of his being called to a seat in the House of Nobles in the Assembly of the States of the Kingdom. This elevation gave him a rank equivalent to that which we express by the appellation of Honorable, and which the receivers of his doctrines usually prefix to his name; but, by the public in general, he is commonly called Baron Swedenborg.

Swedenborg pursued his studies with great application, not only in the University of Upsal, but he likewise visited the universities of England, Holland, France, and Germany. M. Sandel, who delivered an Eulogium to his memory before the Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, on October 7, 1772, exclaims, "How can I delineate so extensive, sublime, and laborious a genius, who was never fatigued in his studious applications, and who unweariedly pursued his investigations into the most profound and difficult sciences; who, for several years successively, has made many useful efforts to discover the secrets of nature, opened and made clear the way to certain sciences, and, in the end, penetrated into the most profound secrets, without ever having lost sight of sound morality, or the fear of the Supreme Being, and preserving the whole strength of his mind to the last, without experiencing that decay of mental faculties to which so many are subject."

The list of his works, which follows, shows the extensive range of his intellect; and their contents are acknowledged to justify the commendations of M. Sandel just quoted, particularly his *Anatomical Works*, which unite with a large fund of experimental science the boldest deductions of reason, many of which have since been proved by more extensive research to be perfectly accurate, and have appeared before the British public in the form of new discoveries.

In the year 1716, and at the early age of twenty-eight, Swedenborg published "*Essays on the Mathematics and Physical Sciences*," under the title of "*Dædalus Hyperboreus*." The following year he published "*An Introduction to Algebra*;" and two years after a work "*On the Position and Motion of the Earth and other Planets*," and "*A new method of discovering the Longitude, whether at Sea or on Land, by the Moon*." We pass over several ingenious and useful works on Mechanics, to his "*Opera Philosophica et Mineralia*," 3 vols. folio, published in 1734. "*Œconomia Regni Animalis*," or "*The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*," in two parts, published in 1740 and 1741, in 4to. The first part treats of the Blood, the Arteries, the Veins, and the Heart; the second, of the motion of the Brain, of the Cortical Substance, and of the Human Soul. "*Regnum Animale*," or "*The Animal Kingdom*," which treats of anatomical subjects not noticed in the preceding volume; with observations on the Touch and the Taste, and on Organical forms in general. Published in 1744 and 1745, in 4to.

In all Swedenborg's Philosophical works there exists a distinguishing characteristic which is too frequently wanting in the productions of learned men,—an eminent degree of veneration for the Supreme Author of nature, and for the volume of divine revelation. Ever watchful for opportunities of deriving, not only instruction, but edification, from contemplating the works of nature, he habitually associated the view

of the grandeur of the creation with the majesty of the Creator; the exhibitions of divine power with the perceptions of the divine beneficence; and drew from all his discoveries additional reasons and incentives for the adoration and worship of the First Cause of being.

Swedenborg's personal religion was not of a merely speculative kind, as appears by the following simple rules, which, from an early period of his life, he prescribed for his daily conduct, and which were found amongst his manuscripts after his decease. "1. *To read frequently the Word of God, and meditate much upon it.* 2. *To be always resigned to, and content under, the care of Providence.* 3. *To observe a decency and propriety of conduct, and to keep a conscience pure, and without offence.* 4. *To be obedient to what is ordained; to be faithful in the discharge of the duties of my station; and to do all in my power to render myself useful to all, without exception."*

The first work noticed above, procured Swedenborg the countenance of the learned, and the favour of the king of Sweden (the famous Charles XII.), who made him the associate of the celebrated Polhammer in the superintendence of the construction of public works. Shortly afterwards he was appointed to the office of Assessor of the Metallic College, a place of considerable public trust and liberal emolument.

He was ennobled in the year 1719, by Queen Ulrica, on which occasion his name was changed from Swedberg to Swedenborg, as already mentioned.

But now we come to the most remarkable part of the life of this extraordinary man. In the year 1743, when in the possession of fame, honour, affluence, and the esteem of a large circle of the learned and virtuous of every nation in Europe, he suddenly announced that the Lord God our Saviour had opened to him a sight of the spiritual world, and had enabled him to converse with spirits and angels, *in order that he might learn and publish to mankind a system of genuine Christian truth.*

From this time (being then fifty-five years of age) he discontinued his studies of natural philosophy, and up to the day of his death, on the 29th of March, 1772, (being a period of twenty-nine years) he continued to declare that he had open communication with the invisible world, and published, in the Latin language, about thirty volumes of theological works, which are interspersed with astonishing narrations of things and occurrences in that world, and which passed, as he asserted, under his clear observation, and while he was wide awake.

Amongst his theological works (all of which have been published in English) are the following " *True Christian Religion, containing the Universal Theology of the New Church, predicted under the figure of the New Jerusalem in the revelation.*" Price 8s. " *Angelic Wisdom concerning the*



*Divine Love and Divine Wisdom.* Price 2s 6d. "*Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Providence.*" Price 4s. "*On Heaven and its Wonders, and also concerning Hell, being a relation of things heard and seen.*" Price 5s. "*The Apocalypse Revealed.*" Price 12s. "*Arcana Cœlestia, or, Heavenly Mysteries contained in the Scriptures, manifested and laid open.*" In thirteen volumes, price 3l. 18s. The reader may do well to commence his studies with a small treatise entitled "*A brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church.*" Price 1s.\*

Several eminent Swedes who witnessed Swedenborg's learning and virtues, embraced his doctrines as being most rational and scriptural; and believed his declarations concerning the spiritual world; and as there are no means of *disproving* those declarations, candour requires that those persons who admire the doctrines of Swedenborg, and on the faith of the veracity of their Author believe his assertions, should be left at free liberty to do so, without incurring blame or injurious imputations from others who may choose to take an opposite view of the case.

In consequence of the Rev. Drs. Beyer and Roseen, Members of the Ecclesiastical Consistory of Gottenburg, having avowed their approval of the theological sentiments of their countryman Swedenborg, a persecution was excited against them by the Dean of that place, and, at length, a mandate was issued from the Supreme Council of State, requiring of Dr. Beyer an explicit statement of his sentiments respecting the writings of Swedenborg. In obedience to the royal order, on the 2nd of January, 1770, Dr. Beyer delivered to the King, Adolphus Frederick, a "*Declaration,*" in which he says: "In regard to the *Doctrines of Religion* contained in our author's works, and which are dispersed through them all, but especially through those volumes which constitute the doctrinal class of his writings; we see them everywhere illuminated, and even according to the letter, unanswerably confirmed by the clearest declarations of the Word; for it is a fundamental rule with him respecting every doctrine of the Church, that it must be drawn from the *literal* meaning of the Word, taken in its proper series and connexion, and confirmed thereby. This rule he has pursued in all his doctrines, which are always clearly proved by the most unquestionable passages of Scripture. See for example, how he has demonstrated, in the *Doctrine concerning the Lord*, that there is but one God; that Jesus Christ is that God; and that in Him is the Divine Trinity, called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Some have rashly attributed Swedenborg's visions to a disordered mind; but his adherents, after a careful investigation of his claims to respect and regard, demand the concomitant marks of such a state in his

\* In the United States, all the theological writings of Swedenborg may be had of Otis Clapp, 12 School street, Boston; John Allen, 139 Nassau street, New York; Publishers' Hall, 101 Chestnut street, Philadelphia; Nicholas Monsarrat, 142 Baltimore street, Baltimore; and Adams Peabody, Cincinnati.

doctrinal writings and conduct : the former, they assert, are remarkable for displays of memory, acuteness of reasoning, novelty and clearness of illustration, and an orderly arrangement scarcely to be equalled ; and as to his behaviour, there is the fullest testimony, that it was always that of an accomplished gentleman, cheerful, polite, and agreeable.

In regard to the intercourse with the spiritual world which Swedenborg asserts that he enjoyed ; those who give credence to it allege in its defence, that the *possibility* of it is proved by numerous narratives in the Sacred Scriptures ; and that if the occurrences or facts stated by Swedenborg, be in any case deemed strange or repugnant to pre-existing ideas, they are greatly exceeded in those characteristics by the things related by John in "*the Revelation* ;" so that if the mere strangeness of supernatural accounts be a legitimate objection, it cannot be admitted against Swedenborg, without being also admitted, in all consistency, against the Apostle John. The reader would be amply repaid by a perusal of the defence of Swedenborg's supernatural narratives, contained in the Preface to his account of *Heaven and Hell*, noticed above. This Preface was written by a clergyman of the highest reputation, the Rev. Mr. Hartley, Rector of Winwick. Still more would the reader be gratified by the perusal of the following every way admirable work : "The practical nature of the Doctrines and alleged Revelations contained in the Writings of the Hon. E. Swedenborg ; together with the peculiar motives to Christian conduct they suggest. In a Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, occasioned by his observations on that subject in his Essays on some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion." By the Rev. Augustus Clissold, M. A., formerly of Exeter College, Oxford. The reader is also referred on this subject to a small but very intelligent "*Essay on the Credibility of Swedenborg*." These works may be procured of the Booksellers before named.

The admirers of Swedenborg's system of theology in this country, style themselves "the New Church," and also "the New Jerusalem Church," in consequence of his having declared, that the doctrines he delivered constituted a pure and perfect body of Christianity, which, when received into the heart, and exemplified in the conduct, would bring about that exalted state of the Christian Church predicted, under the figure of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, in the Revelation of John. They are not at present a numerous body, but the smallness of their number they contend is no argument against the truth of their opinions, their Author having given them reason to expect, that as his system is addressed to the intellectual powers of mankind, and is congenial only to disinterested dispositions, it will make its way in the world but slowly. Justice must admit that the members of the New Church are a moral and respectable body of people, and exhibit a deep veneration for the Sacred Scriptures. In their controversies with other Christian

denominations, their champions, especially the Rev. John Clowes, Rector of St. John's, Manchester, and the Reverend Messrs. Hindmarsh and Noble, have manifested considerable ability and acuteness, combined with much moderation, even where they have had reason to complain of the disingenuousness of their opponents. Mr. Noble's "APPEAL" in behalf of the New Church, is a work which cannot but recommend itself with every candid and intelligent Christian.

In every point of view, Swedenborg is certainly to be clearly distinguished from the host of ignorant and half witted enthusiasts. His rank, his virtues, his learning, and his talents, demand this just discrimination. And, since the Scriptures oblige us to believe in the *possibility* of supernatural communications; there is perhaps no better way of trying their validity, whenever they are professed, than by considering the personal character of the party professing them; the *facts* attendant on his conduct and behaviour; and the intrinsic value of the *results* which are offered as arising out of them.

THE END.

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